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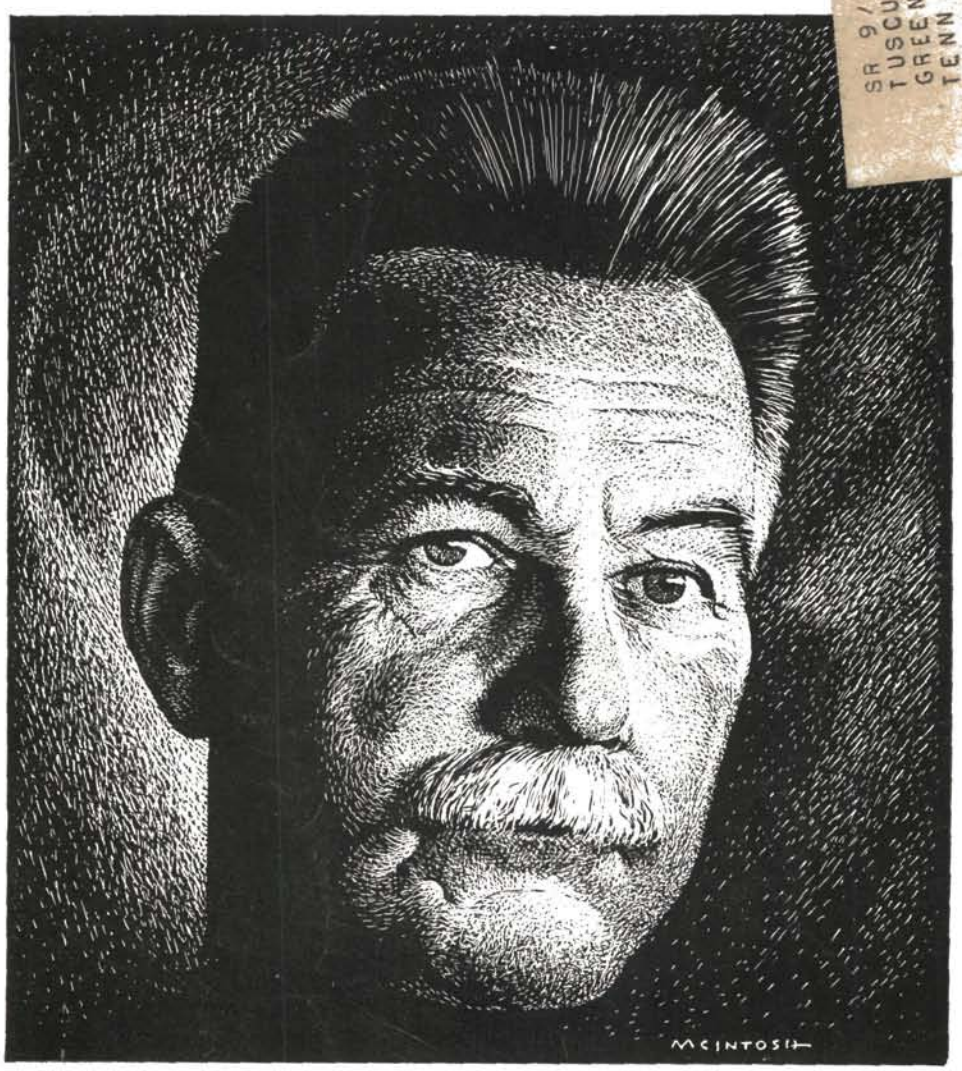

Van Wyck Brooks. *(See page 11)*

A New "Hugo" for France

By JACKSON MATTHEWS

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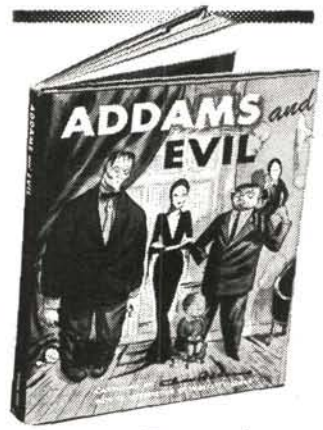

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This Week

November 8, 1947

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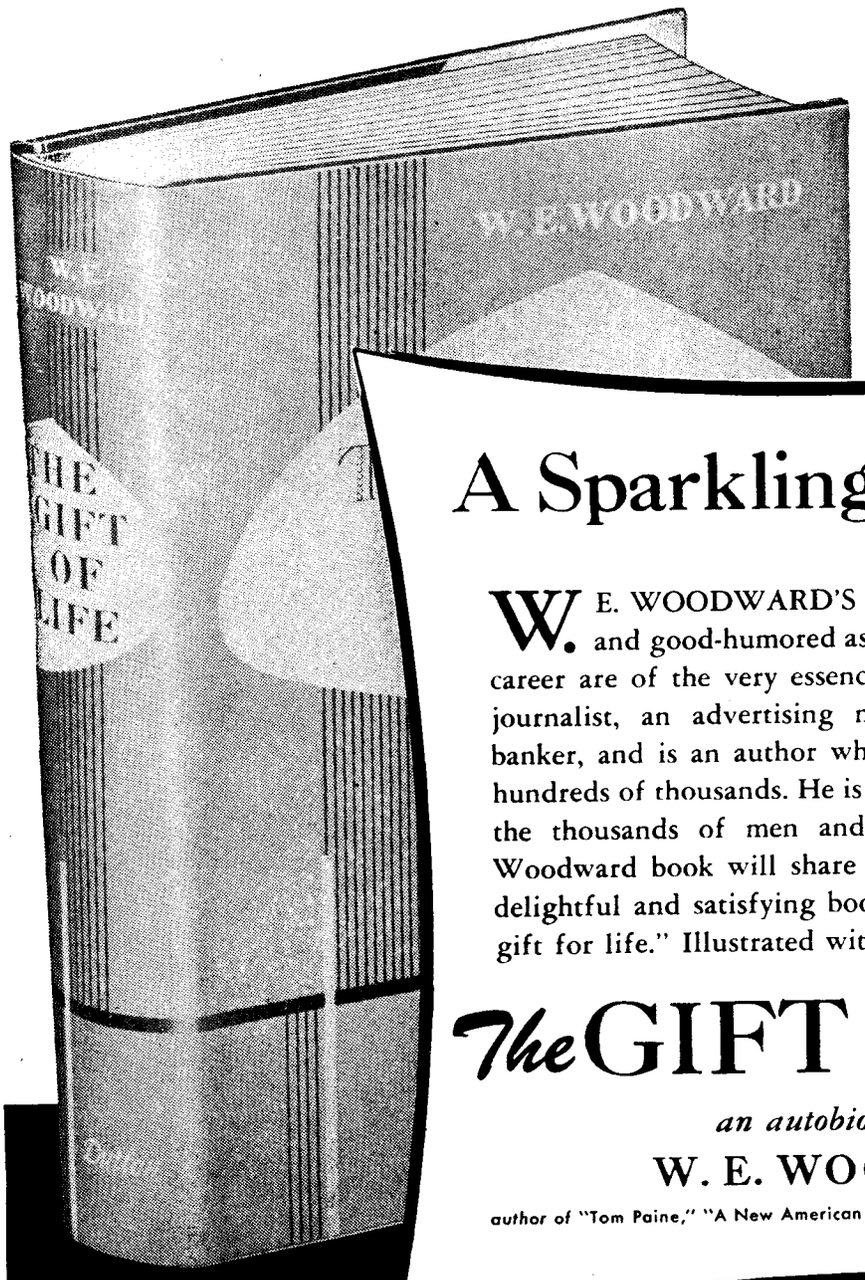

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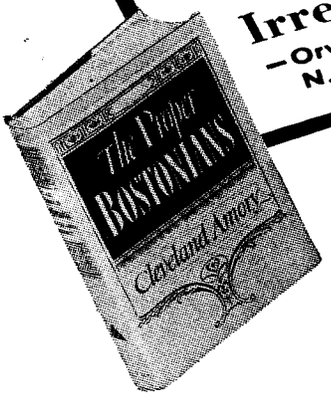

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TRADE Winds

THE OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE of the House Committee on Un-American Activities' investigation of Hollywood was to expose its domination by Communist elements. What the Committee succeeded principally in accomplishing, however, was to give the American public a graphic picture of fascism in action. It was a warning that will not go unheeded. After listening to two days of the hearing, Charles MacArthur commented sadly, "I could see the Reichstag burning!"

The behavior of the Committee itself, the witnesses who hurled accusations and smeared reputations without fear of rebuttal, and the obscene gloating of the worst newspapers in the United States made even Hollywood's biggest magnates, some of whom had favored the investigation in the first place, realize finally that the objectives of the Committee were not the castigation of a handful of miserable little Communists but a brazen attempt to dictate to Hollywood exactly what kind of pictures were to be made or shown in the future.

Motion-picture producers were not the only ones who observed the spectacle with dawning consciousness of what was at stake. People of the theatre, publishers of newspapers, magazines, and books, and all writers left of the Menjou-Dixon line, wondered who was next on the list if this Committee was allowed to continue its hatchet work. Several of the Committee's best trained seals threw off unmistakable hints of future activities in this direction.

As for the crowds, who jammed the Committee room "cheering madly" every idiotic remark of the curious array of witnesses, they were there, of course, to gape at Gary Cooper, Robert Montgomery, and suchlike. They would have cheered just as madly anything these gods had had to say about the tapioca crop in Brazil. . . .

ADDENDA TO the Bernard Shaw Legend: An engaging young British journalist was sent down to Shaw's country home in Ayot St. Lawrence to wheedle him into writing a piece called "How to Grow Old Gracefully." Shaw's answer was justifiably unfit for publication, but then he took pity on the journalist, and said, "I know you are trying only to carry out a ludicrous assignment. To keep you from going away empty-handed, I'll tell you how I happened to settle in this little town. I was here on a visit, and in the course of one of my long walks I came upon a graveyard. One of the tombstones bore an inscription that ran something like this:

MARY ANN SOUTHWORTH
BORN 1815 — DIED 1895
MAY HER SOUL REST IN PEACE
HER TIME WAS TOO SHORT

"That settled it! I decided that if eighty years was the villagers' idea of a short life, Ayot St. Lawrence was the place for me!"

Michael Blankfort has sent me a copy of a letter he addressed to Shaw in 1944, when he (Blankfort) was a captain in the U. S. Marine Corps:

Dear Mr. Shaw:

My daughter who is seven and who has a passion to find out just what God looks like, plagued me over one week-end liberty to show her a picture of God.

I am one of the thirty-five-year-old moderns whose philosophical teeth had been broken on Spinoza, Shaw, and Marx, and instead of admitting that there was no picture of God, I tried to sell her a simple pantheism. But children are not philosophers. They are cynical realists. How could God be in everything and everybody? The facts were against it. He was either a giant who held the world in his hand—or he was "pretending." If Jesus isn't God—then who is—and what does he look like?

With the usual duplicity of parents, I shifted the burden to her. I gave her two books—a collection of Michelangelo and a collection of Rodin. I suggested that she look through the pictures and pick out the one that seemed to her most like God. I warned her to take her time, for once she had decided, I was going to cut the picture out and pin it on the wall. She accepted the challenge and went to work.

As of today, the picture on her wall, over her bed, is a large reproduction of Rodin's George Bernard Shaw.

Once, as in my case, you were held up as a devilish perverter of children. Now, via Rodin, you are their deity.

I thought you would be interested in this story, not that it will surprise you—rather because it will probably confirm your own judgment.

Shaw replied promptly as follows:

The victory is not to me; but to Rodin over Michaelangelo. But where everyone shaves, the Beaver is godlike. People say that the Rodin bust is not like me. I alone know that it is, though it is unlike my reputation, which is only a part that I act. Kiss your daughter for me. . . .

PUBLISHERS LOOKING for a story with a brand-new twist are referred to the talented Hollywood producer Nunnally Johnson. Nunnally's acquisition of the screen rights to "Mr. Peabody's Mermaid" prompted him to delve into all available lore on the intriguing subject of mermaids. "In all the stories," he reports breathlessly, "they are pictured alike: the top halves are beautiful girls, the bottom halves fish. If somebody will commission it, I have a different tale to tell. *My* mermaid's *upper* half will be the fish, her lower half the girl."

Johnson adds that he knows just the star to play the title role in pic-

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Book-of-the-Month Club News

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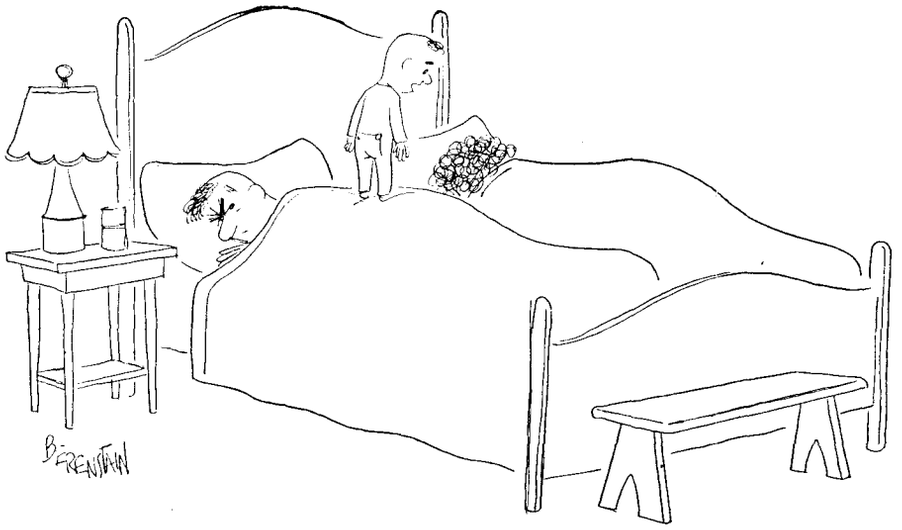

"Hey, Mom, what are we having for Sunday breakfast?"

tures, but prefers that somebody else offer her the part. . . .

Joe Hazen, another Coast luminary, contributed this story:

Two college chums met for the first time in twenty years, and after the usual greetings, one asked, "What's happened to those four fine boys you had?"

"The oldest," reported the father proudly, "is a great legal light. He's working in the district attorney's office now. The salary is very low, but the training will help him soar to the top.

"The second son is an engineer. You should see the bridges that boy has designed! He's worked only for the WPA so far, but his break is bound to come.

"My third son is going to be a renowned surgeon. He's an interne now, and we have to support him, but that will all be changed one day."

The father showed no inclination to go on, and his friend had to remind him, "But what about your youngest? You haven't said a word about him."

"Oh, him," said the father with a pronounced lack of enthusiasm. "He drifted out to California and became a motion-picture producer. He's making four thousand dollars a week, but what kind of work is that for a son of mine?" Then he conceded, "Of course, if it wasn't for him, the rest of us all would be starving to death."

MISS GENE TIERNEY attended a fashionable party in Westchester where her dinner partner's idea of fascinating small talk turned out to be a verbatim recitation of the contents of the current issue of a famous digest magazine. An article on the habits and potential menace of white ants had impressed him most. "They build whole cities with one-way streets," he declared. "They have captive snakes who serve as bridges to span creeks and rivulets. Someday an irresistible army of millions of white ants will invade this very State of Connecticut. . . ." Miss Tierney drifted into a deep reverie at this point, and completely lost the trend of her partner's chit-chat. By the time the speaker recaptured her attention, he had completed his dissertation on white ants, and, mentally thumbing the pages of his source book, had begun boring the assemblage to death with the story of some obscure professor who could unravel the most intricate code in a matter of minutes. Miss Tierney restored everybody's spirits by interrupting the narrator angrily, "You don't expect us to believe now that white ants can decipher codes!" . . .

TWO ENTERPRISING PUBLISHERS founded a partnership and over a period of years built up a profitable line of low-priced juveniles. One spring day the elder of the two actually was lured away from work to join a golf foursome. At lunchtime, however, he made a bee-line for the telephone in the locker room and called his office. "Anything happen this morning?" he asked anxiously.

"Anything happen!" echoed his partner excitedly. "We got the biggest order in our history by wire from Marshall Field, that's all." "Have Miss Jones read it to me right away," cried the senior member of the firm.

Miss Jones came to the phone and said brightly, "Here it is, Mr. Stern. 'Ship immediately forty dozen "Pinocchio." Stop. Eight dozen "Black Beauty." Stop. Seventy-three dozen "Mother Goose." Stop. . . .' " The angry voice of Mr. Stern interrupted her recital, "Listen," he screamed to his partner, "would you be kind enough to leave that girl alone till she finishes reading the telegram?"

BENNETT CERF.

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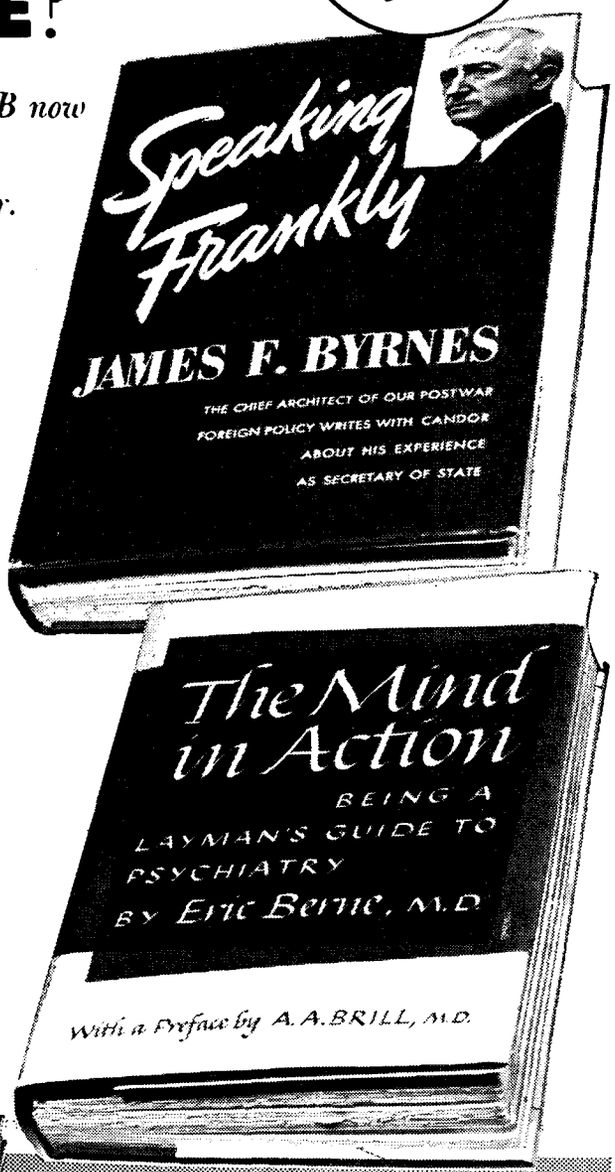
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Invitation to a Party...

R.S.V.P.

A GREAT MANY New York City people have a way of saying "upstate" so that it means everything from Parkchester on. We ourselves have softened so that it now includes parts west and north of Albany, though at one time "upstate" meant Buffalo and the hundred odd miles west of it around Lake Erie to the Pennsylvania border. It's a nice part of the world. Some wags would have it that there are just two seasons there: winter, and the Fourth of July. Other people like to walk through the snow. They like to fish through the ice of Lake Erie after driving half a mile out from shore in ancient jalopies that can't remember what it's like to drive on land. They like the stretch of days that permits October a little of the warmth of July. They like August and September, and the times when grapes are ripe for picking on the farms near Fredonia and Dunkirk and Westfield. People who come from upstate are apt to think that grape vines stretching away from the lake are a prettier sight than buildings, or that a field of warm red tomatoes is friendlier than a sky line.

Fredonia, New York, is probably a representative upstate town. It's a pretty place. There's a little park in the center and one important business street crossed by another that goes on to Dunkirk one mile away by Lake Erie. There's a traditional rivalry between the two towns, the way there sometimes is between kids who grow up next door to each other and aim for the same things. People who live in Fredonia are proud of the fact that Jean Webster lived there. Fredonians may not have a harbor, but they have DADDY LONGLEGS, her most famous piece of writing. There's a strong chance that most Americans over twenty-five have read the book or seen the play.

The Websters used to live in a big house where two streets intersect and form a kind of V so that the lawn slopes down on three sides to a public thoroughfare. Jean Webster's brother Samuel was born in New York City, but he spent a good part of his life in that house and when he was in the office the other day we talked about the town and some of the town's people. His new book, although it was written for children, has that deep baritone sense of humor and fantasy that does not exclude the grown-up reader. We think Fredonians may take it less hard if Dunkirk should beat them at football this season, because the Webster family has a way of reflecting a considerable amount of literary light, and THE KING GIVES A PARTY is going to be a favorite book to lots of people.

The story itself is wonderland stuff, with a firm, tough core of realism. Factually, it's the adventure of a boy called Teddy who attends Cinderella's ball as Ambassador Extraordinary from the United States. But he gets there seven hours early and those seven hours are spent with one of the most amusing Kings who ever lived in fiction.

The King turned to Teddy. "You see, Teddy, what a marvelous system we have here? I systematized it myself. Before that everything was in a mess. All one big pile. Now it's all regulated. But you have to know your alphabet. Do you know how to spell, Teddy?"

"Some," said Teddy.

"Well, you see, we want butter. That begins with a B, doesn't it?"

"Yes," agreed Teddy.

"Well, that's the B pile. You go over there and you'll find everything we want —butter and bananas. You hunt on that side of the pile and I'll hunt on this side. But don't make too much noise because we mustn't wake the storekeeper."

Teddy could hear his voice continuing on the other side of the pile as they set to work. "It used to be an awful job to find things, but now it doesn't take half the time. System's a wonderful thing, Teddy."

"*But everything's so mixed up!*" protested Teddy.

"Not if you keep things in the right pile." said the King. "Be careful not to throw anything into the C pile, because that upsets the whole system. There! I've got the butter. There are some buttons in it, but we can use those around the house. You always want buttons, Teddy."

"Wouldn't it be better to sort things out?" suggested Teddy.

"They're already sorted out," replied the King. "Have you found any bananas, Teddy?"

"I've got a few," said Teddy. "They're a little squashy."

"You want them soft," said the King. "They *digest* better."

Teddy kept on burrowing. He found books, baseball bats, and a bicycle. At last he came out triumphant with two dozen bananas. He was a little tired when he drew away from the pile and went around to the other side. He found the King playing with a banjo. It was rather sticky, as there was some butterscotch on it.

"You know, a store like this is very instructive," said the King. "You find all sorts of things you want. Now this banjo. I never played one before, and I find I can play it as well as anybody. I think I'll take it along. I have a gift for music, Teddy."

Maybe Sam Webster couldn't help writing a good book and a wonderful story. His grand-uncle Mark Twain kept running into the same difficulty and his sister Jean Webster was similarly vexed. We happen to be thoroughly delighted by his gift for combining wit and lightness with incisive satire, but we're not prepared to lay it to heredity or to the upstate air. This is nonsense and logic by a born storyteller and a careful artist who just happens to have quite a literary background. You don't have to be an upstate New Yorker, you don't have to be a child; if you are at all like us, you'll be happy with the world that Webster makes in THE KING GIVES A PARTY.

THE KING GIVES A PARTY

A Children's Book for Nonsense-Lovers of all ages

By Samuel C. Webster **$2.00**

AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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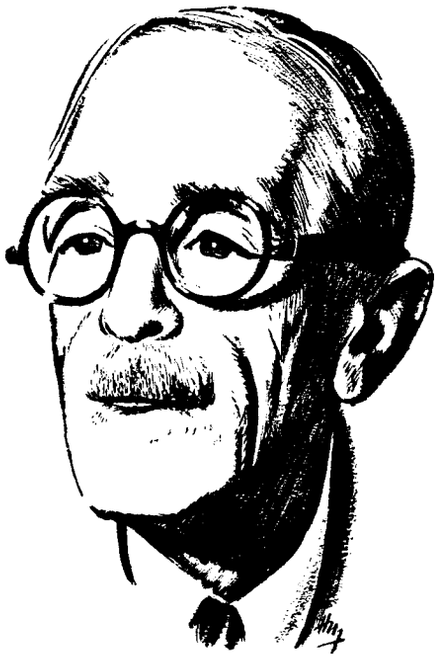
The Saturday Review of Literature



A New "Hugo" for France

JACKSON MATTHEWS

IT MAY be said in strict seriousness that Paul Valéry died in July 1945 at the right moment. France, with almost nothing left but her language—reduced, it would seem, to her essential glory—was in sad need of a hero. The moment and the need produced . . . the death of Valéry. His funeral, to the surprise of all outsiders, and with sudden, almost unintended ceremony and splendor, became an occasion of national mourning. All sorts of public honors (election to the French Academy, to a chair at the Collège de France) had made of this modest man, "poet of the intelligence," writer of difficult and illuminating little essays, somehow the official literary figure of his country, despite his protest that he was not really a man of letters at all. And I believe we shall see, when the impossible confusion through which he lived has been turned into a more possible past, that the figure of Paul Valéry stands for his age, as Voltaire and Hugo stand for theirs. As hero and symbol of the mind he is of their stature and, even in his symbolic death, *illustrates* the only France of his time.

Valéry was a southerner, meaning in France a Mediterranean man. His Italian mother and Corsican father lived on the quay-side at Sète, where he was born in 1871. Until he was grown he had hardly been out of earshot of the Mediterranean, and from that sea his sensibility absorbed the images and energies that stocked his memory: the harbor at Sète, the noise of dock machinery, the fishing boats, and the bed of bright fish-entrails under the green surface near the wharf; the old park at Montpellier darkened with Poësque cypress trees; the aquarium at Monaco; the steep streets of Genoa, where he spent his vacations, and the powerful water he drenched himself in all summer. The old cemetery overlooking the sea at Sète, where Valéry is buried, became in his mature imagination a great poem.

At school, boredom drove the boy's interests to architecture, poetry, mathematics, music, painting. He read Poe's *Eureka*, the poems of Mallarmé, and studied mathematics and Wagner's music with passion. A chance meeting with Pierre Louys at Montpellier in 1890 brought him Paris, André Gide, and the decisive personal influence of his life, Stéphane Mallarmé.

Mallarmé's work had given Valéry a peculiar formative shock. These marvelous little "crystal systems," as he called Mallarmé's poems, struck the terror of perfection into him. Reading them, he could feel nothing but despair ("beauty is that which makes us despair"). He was himself already writing some very good poems indeed, but now his mind was driven past poems themselves to wonder how these "crystal systems" were constructed; the one thing superior to a perfect poem, he thought, would be a full knowledge of how it was made. He was soon to give up writing poems himself and turn his intense powers to the study of "the preparation of these beauties," the generation of poems in the poet's mind. Valéry was already coming into possession of his own and proper subject: *the mind behind the work.*

His decision to renounce poetry was very much like a conversion. The crisis came at Genoa, on a stormy night in August 1892: "A frightful night . . . my room brilliant with lightning . . . and my whole fate being played out in my head . . . between me and me." He decided to leave Montpellier for Paris, where he put up in a student hotel near the Luxembourg Gardens. His room was like a monk's cell, one picture (of a skeleton), and a blackboard always covered with mathematical equations. He was a favorite at Mallarmé's Tuesday evenings.

Giving up poetry was by no means a simple matter. Valéry had for some time felt in literature and art certain serious inadequacies. They did not satisfy the range of his demands to know himself and the world; as method they were too vague, as instruments they were not precise. He was powerfully drawn to mathematics and the exact sciences, to the possibilities of precision, the means of discovery he saw in many branches of knowledge. His rejection of poetry was thus a manner of freeing his mind of an exclusive preoccupation, a manner of clearing his head for the application of new intellectual methods—an acquisition of freedom. Already the range of his interests, the erudition he turned into resources of wit, the serious meanings at play in his gaiety and personal charm, astonished and fascinated the young poets and *littérateurs* who were his friends.

But his new freedom was not easy. Valéry now felt in himself the conflict between several visions of the world demanding to be reconciled. He admired Mallarmé's solution: to make of poetry a metaphysics—conscious control of the poetic processes carried to the point of heroism. In Poe's "Eureka" he found, to our surprise in America, one of the century's great efforts to solve the conflict by turning scientific vision into poetry. But

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it was in Leonardo that Valéry found the great instance of the whole mind, the mind that had mastered all the arts and sciences, turning them all into instruments of his power. This resolution of an old conflict furnished the theme of the best of Valéry's early prose, in particular two pieces he never ceased to meditate on the rest of his life: "An Evening with M. Teste" (1894), and his "Introduction to the Method of Leonardo da Vinci" (1894-5).

THE death of Mallarmé in 1898 struck Valéry a paralyzing blow. Whether this was the cause or not, the fact is that he now abandoned writing altogether and entered a period of study and inner cultivation of his powers that was to last for nearly twenty years. It was during this part of his life that he developed the habits of work that were so much an expression of his mind: the practice of rising at five in the morning to take notes on the coming of consciousness. For more than forty years this man was up before day, and after a cup of warmed-over coffee, was at his desk noting every nuance of the double dawn staining his window and himself. The notebooks he filled in this way with drawings, meditations, figures, water-colors, scraps, and scribblings from the whole life of a great mind at work, now fill the bookshelves of his former study. Their publication, difficult certainly, may yet discover an intellectual mine.

Valéry returned to the practice of poetry at the insistence of André Gide during the First World War. His first "exercise," as he called it, elaborated over a period of several years and finally published in 1917, took fame by a "poetic *coup d'etat.*" This was "La Jeune Parque." Within the next five years he added the small body of perfect poems that made him the most authentic poet living. "Of all the poets, in any language, of the last thirty years," said T. S. Eliot recently, ". . . it is he who will remain for posterity the representative poet, the symbol of the poet, of the first half of the twentieth century —not Yeats, not Rilke, not anyone else."

VALERY saw everything from the point of view of the intelligence: *tout par rapport à l'intelligence.* The mind, so often said to be his subject, might better be called the controlling metaphor of his work, for like all great subjects this one led into the whole world. If Valéry's preoccupation was the pursuit of consciousness, no one knew better than he that the pursuit began in himself, and led through man, the world, and history. "How long will it take us," says Léon-Paul Fargue, "to see that Valéry spoke of just those things men own in common, the least fragile of things: the sky, the sea, beauty, change and the moveless, the taste for solving enigmas, and the great art of being wary of what is called the new." Yet, whatever Valéry was discussing, whether it was Greek geometry, Europe, myth, Descartes, or poetry, his deep concern was always with some maneuver, some possibility, method, or situation (often tragic) of the mind. He looked at seashells, studied mathematical physics, went to a ballet, read Poe, or waked early in the morning, all to the same end, to get the light from these diverse angles, times, and objects upon his obsessive center: the conscious mind.

Consciousness is naturally dramatic, since it is always embodied, in its opposite. It is just that quality which cannot be isolated or known. That elusive humanity in us, our Self, is unknowable, said Valéry, because it is "that which knows," it is that generalized awareness which includes, *comprehends*, all we know. It is the irreducible active voice of man. Like the wind, it can be *seen* only in other things. The circle of consciousness closes around its universe of events; all *things* are subordinate to "that pure universality, that insurmountable generality consciousness feels itself to be."

In a beautiful passage of his "Note and Digression" on Leonardo, Valéry turned the dramatic nature of consciousness into this extended figure: Consciousness, he says, is like

> an audience, invisible in the darkness of a theatre. A presence that can never see itself, condemned to watch the opposite spectacle on the stage; and yet it knows it fills all that breathing, unalterably oriented night. Complete, impenetrable night, absolute night; but numbered, most arid, and secretly organized night, structured of organisms that limit and press on each other; night compacted of a darkness alive with organs that can applaud or hiss, or be excited, each keeping its place and function, according to its nature. And opposite, facing this intense and mysterious audience, shining, moving in a closed frame, are all Sensible, all Intelligible, all Possible Things. Nothing can be born, die, or be at all, or occupy a moment of time, a place, a meaning, an image—except on this limited stage, circumscribed by destiny, lifted from

(*Continued on page* 47)

The House

By Elizabeth Stanton Hardy

HERSELF a shadow in the crumbling house
Of a lost childhood,
She remembers the garden at morning.
The gnarled boughs
Of ancient apple trees,
Remembers yet
The tang of tansy
Musk of mignonette
Tangled with angry bees.

Slowly she drifts along
The arbor paths,
Crushing a bitter herb upon her tongue.

So under the trellis of evening
She watches the white
Moth fluttering, hears
Only the sad requiem of night,
Ebbing of empty years.

Here in this crumbling house,
Herself a thin
Shadow among more shadows,
Time unclocked,
She is walled in,
All doors and windows locked.

—*Wide World.*

My Current Reading

SRL has asked a number of well-known public figures to report on their current reading—books they have just read, are reading now, or plan to read shortly. Our latest list comes from **David E. Lilienthal,** chairman of the United States Atomic Energy Commission:

TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST, *by Richard Henry Dana, Jr.*
INSIDE U.S.A., *by John Gunther*
EXPLAINING THE ATOM, *by Selig Hecht*
CHRIST STOPPED AT EBOLI, *by Carlo Levi*
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
ON UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE, *by James Bryant Conant*
THE NATURE OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD, *by Sir Arthur Eddington*

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Belles-Lettres.

In 1915 reform was in the air, Progressivism was at its peak, the new poetry was appearing, and the village was sprouting with gifted bohemians. In that year a young socialist critic, Van Wyck Brooks, published his stirring manifesto, "America's Coming of Age." He called for a new American literature, for an attack on American materialism, for an affirmation of the artist's place in society. In the disillusioned 1920's, still preoccupied with the dilemma of the artist in an acquisitive society, Brooks published iconoclastic studies of Mark Twain and Henry James—artists, he believed, who had been warped by American life. But Brooks had now savored the taste of American literature. He fell in love with his subject. The bitterness forgotten, the Socialist fervor mellowed in maturity, Brooks began in the 1930's his loving study of our American literature.

Our Rich Vein of Literary Ore

THE TIMES OF MELVILLE AND WHITMAN. By Van Wyck Brooks. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1947. 489 pp. $5.

Reviewed by LEWIS MUMFORD

THIS is the fourth volume in the great literary history which Van Wyck Brooks began to publish in 1936; and it remains on the same high level as the earlier books in the series. According to the author's intentions, it follows "The Flowering of New England." In his prefatory note Mr. Brooks has announced a fifth volume, which will deal with the period from 1885 to the First World War. Should any further volumes be forthcoming, beyond that, Mr. Brooks will either have to comb through the colonial writers or, in dealing with his immediate contemporaries, abandon the vein he has opened in these books. Perhaps now, at the crest of his theme, is as good a time as any for considering, not merely "The Times of Melville and Whitman," but the series as a whole.

The central characters of the present volume rank alongside the grand Massachusetts triumvirate, Emerson, Thoreau, and Hawthorne, who gave form to the life and mind of New England. But the book ranges over the whole country, dealing with the writers of the South, the Hoosiers and Middle Westerners, and finally the writers who first gained fame on the Pacific Coast, Harte, Bierce, Mark Twain. As in the other books in this history, Mr. Brooks brings vividly back to mind many writers who have by now become only themes for Ph.D. theses, and rouses one's curiosity about their works: Charles Godfrey Leland for one, and Constance Fenimore Woolson for another. Twenty-five years ago, when the Bonis and Knopfs were planning libraries of the neglected American classics, hardly anyone knew enough about American literature to suggest what works cried to be reprinted. But today, thanks largely to Mr. Brooks, a considerable library might be published: indeed, one could hardly ask for a more worthy task for a university press to perform than to bring out a library of two- or three-score volumes of minor but vital works of American literature. The underwriting of such a non-commercial venture would make more sense than a good many more popular philanthropies.

Into "The Times of Melville and Whitman" have gone the same happy qualities that make the other books in the series such classic interpretations of the American spirit; no less of those old qualities, and no more. If the effect of the present volume is not so strong and positive as that which "The Flowering of New England" originally made, this is not because Mr. Brooks's pen has flagged, but because the method, which seemed so fresh—and actually *was* fresh—in the first published volume has now become pat. We are inured to Mr. Brooks's virtues, and almost resent them, as one sometimes resents being too long in the company of someone who never swears or loses his temper or drops his conciliatory smile. He works like a Dutch painter; every part of the canvas has the same high finish, the same loving perfection of detail; esthetically speaking, the roast fowl and the cheese on the table are as important as the faces of the diners. Unless one measures the amount of space given, one can hardly tell when Mr. Brooks passes from a great writer to a little one. Those are the defects of very great qualities.

As in his other books, Mr. Brooks is completely saturated in his material. He knows the writers of Amer-

THE AUTHOR: Van Wyck Brooks was born in Plainfield, N. J., decided to be a writer at thirteen, was one at twenty-one with "The Wine of the Puritans," a year after he took his degree and a Phi Beta Kappa key from Harvard. Published in London in 1909 during a journalistic fling there, it seems "childish" now to Mr. Brooks, who was forty before his pen really ripened. "The Ordeal of Mark Twain" and "The Pilgrimage of Henry James," among a flock of belletristic works, established him at the helm of literary criticism. "The Flowering of New England," first of the projected six volumes encompassing American letters, headed best-seller lists for fifty-nine weeks, won the Pulitzer Prize and the Limited Editions Club's Gold Medal. "New England: Indian Summer," "The World of Washington Irving," and the book opposite followed. He's now perusing the approximately 500 books preliminary to each of the series for No. 5, which he expects will total 900 before the usual three years' gestation is over. It will span 1885 and World War I. The last will consider between-wars writers. Both may require a changed technique. "When I get into a writer, I get so excited about him I can't decide which is greatest," says Mr. Brooks. He gets up at six, reads an hour before breakfast, writes until noon in a serene, book-lined study, reads more afternoons, has a twilight noggin with Mrs. Brooks. Then, perhaps, a movie—"just like anyone else." He's contributed to dictionaries, encyclopedias, and newspapers, worked with an authors' agency, two publishers, three magazines. He's a Socialist, has smoky hair, white mustache, a bit of Puck in his eyes. Westport, Conn., was his home many years; now he owns a cooperative apartment near Manhattan's East River. He's dubious about New York: "There's too much going on."

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ica, the houses they lived in, the places they ate and drank in, the countryside where they farmed or rambled, as if he himself had been born a hundred different times in as many different places, and had spent all his life acting as a sort of collective Boswell. Like Thomas Beer, his only rival in this department, he remembers the significant little facts about our writers as well as the major events in their lives: he knows the family connections and who invited whom to dinner when Thackeray was in town. The effect is as intimate as if the reader himself were native to the scene. We put our own latchkey in the door of the utopian phalanstery in New York where Edmund Clarence Stedman lived before the Civil War; we sit in the cellar at Pfaff's and exchange a brazen kiss with Ada Clare, the first of our female literary Bohemians; with Mr. Brooks as guide, we clamber up to the very rock near Troubeck in Dutchess County, where Myron Benton first read Walt Whitman to John Burroughs. That richness of detail, that colorful sense of actuality, are precious. Here, as in almost no other American history, one gets the feeling of life as it was actually lived—the outward life at least; for it is with the eye of Teniers and De Hoogh, not Rembrandt, that Mr. Brooks views the American scene. Reading Mr. Brooks's literary history one feels the full justice of Whitman's statement (I must quote from memory): "There is no more need for romance; let facts and history be properly told."

Now, the central interest of this literary history lies not in the books themselves, but rather in the circumstances and personalities that produced them. This accordingly is not a work to be profitably compared with de Sanctis's "History of Italian Literature" or even with Taine's "History of English Literature"; any judgment of Mr. Brooks's achievement based on the notion that he is concerned with books rather than with people must necessarily be false, as well as unfair to Mr. Brooks's openly declared intentions. It is as history, and not as a criticism and interpretation of literature, that these books must primarily be judged; whatever Mr. Brooks's own original bias and interest, the more deeply he delved into this material the more fully did he commit himself to the historian's task, and the more fascinated did he become with the setting and circumstances of American literature; so that the books he treats are a means to enrich his historical narrative, rather than an end in themselves. As historian, Mr. Brooks is incomparable; for the first time, he places our writers in the mainstream of American life, and in so doing adds an extra dimension to all that we know about political, economic, and military affairs. The America he has uncovered was almost as remote from the ordinary historian as the other side of the moon; small wonder that some of them, to hide their ignorance, have accused him of inventing it; whereas the truth is that the precious materials that Mr. Brooks has used have been lying on the surface all the time, waiting for some original eye to detect them and pick them up. As a historian, he has blazed a new Oregon Trail, in the spirit of his great precursors, Parkman and Prescott.

Not merely has Mr. Brooks preempted for himself a field that no one had scratched even with a digging stick, to say nothing of having plowed and cultivated; with great energy and doggedness, he has performed a feat that probably no other man has done before: he has actually read practically every book produced by the writers whose lives and times he has portrayed. The fact that the original documents he has used are so much richer in perceptions, feeling, images, values than the more arid materials which the ordinary historian has used, under the prejudice that a newspaper is less subjective than a poem, accounts for the peculiar vitality of his narrative. Naturally, this is disconcerting to a generation that confuses objectivity with lack of emotion, scientific accuracy with an absence of images, truth with the habit of throwing away data that cannot be quantitatively measured. Mr. Brooks's originality and his thoroughness, *as historian*, have awakened envy in circles which should regard his pioneering work with nothing but grateful respect. The catty belittlement that has often greeted Mr. Brooks's achievement, the attempts to magnify infinitesimal blemishes and neglect the stunning completeness of his surveys, must be recorded as a black mark against sundry American historians and professors of American literature. Mr. Brooks has committed the unforgivable sin of knowing more than they do. Among professors, that sore of offense is not easily pardoned.

So much for the material Mr. Brooks has brought to light. What shall one say about the purpose and the method? At the outset Mr. Brooks must have faced an open choice: he could either undertake a combination of history and criticism, which would give equal place to writers *and* books;

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

UNDER FOREIGN FLAGS

David Bernstein, of Chicago, offers a quiz on literary characters who served in the armies of foreign nations. How many of them do you remember? Allowing five points for each character you can identify and five for the author who created him, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 15.

1. When faced with possible execution by a firing squad, this American serving in the Italian army deserted and fled to Switzerland with his sweetheart.
2. In order to protect his wife, who, believing him dead, had remarried, this Englishman spent many arduous years as a private in the French Foreign Legion.
3. This North African Moor was put in command of the forces of the Venetian Republic in an expedition against the Turkish fleet off Cyprus.
4. An Argentinian citizen, he abandoned his career as a playboy and served valorously in the armies of France until his death in combat.
5. This American journalist participated actively in the Spanish Civil War as a member of a Loyalist guerilla band.
6. An obsession with the Scottish half of his parentage led this American traveling salesman to enlist in a Canadian Highlander battalion and eventually to emigrate to Scotland.
7. This Englishman acquitted himself gallantly as a warrior in a revolution which aided the king of a semi-civilized African kingdom to regain his rightful throne.
8. This young Scotchman joined many of his fellow countrymen in a special regiment in the service of the King of France.
9. Forced to flee his own country, he joined the forces of his country's hereditary enemy, but was spared at the last minute from going into battle against his homeland.
10. This German, an illegitimate son of the King of Saxony, led the armies of France in a great victory over the English on a day he was suffering a terrible attack of dropsy.

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or he could write a history that would confine itself mostly to people and scenes, omitting any effort to describe the books in detail, to weigh their relative importance, to reopen judgment upon their value, acts of reflective assessment that require an abundance of leisure. He could not hope to finish the first kind of work in any probable lifetime; so, at this crossroads a dozen years ago, he chose to confine himself to history alone, pushing through his task at a rapid, unflagging pace, looking neither to the right nor left, never pausing, never delaying, never attempting any detailed evaluation which might prevent him from reaching the goal he had set himself: a complete literary history of the United States as a whole.

Now, Mr. Brooks is such a just and well-ballasted critic, so full of generous insights, so firmly attached to the main trunk of human values, never diverted by mere fashions or taken in by frauds, that one may well regret the decision he made to cover the whole ground superficially, instead of to cover a portion of it exhaustively. Doing this, he thereby neglected the books he had so patiently mastered, and in the end, will make it imperative for someone else to do the whole job over again. To understand what was sacrificed, take Mr. Brooks's treatment of Whitman in the present volume. He interprets the vision of "Leaves of Grass" with true understanding, and handles the sexual problem in Whitman's work with wiser judgment, perhaps, than anyone else has yet shown; yet "Leaves of Grass" itself is missing from this chapter, and a reader who had never encountered Whitman would have to guess at the form and texture of the work itself. The effect of glibness in Mr. Brooks's prose would be rectified if he halted his narrative long enough to introduce the books he refers to and let the authors speak occasionally in their proper person, instead of through Mr. Brooks's ventriloquial mouth. Even as history, I submit, the story is not complete without such details, any

more than a history of architecture would be complete without the plans and photographs of the buildings that are being discussed. Because Mr. Brooks has not allowed himself the latitude and leisure he needs to be both critic and historian, even the historian's work loses some of its impact.

This weakness in Mr. Brooks's history rose plainly out of his original decision. Though I regret that decision, because it does not do full justice to Mr. Brooks's powers, he had perhaps his own reasons for making it; and at all events, it is useless at this late date to quarrel with it. His literary history is history in the classic sense of a narrative about events; and the narrative flows on, from period to period, from author to author, from region to region, like the mighty Hudson, hardly changing its direction, never altering the rate of flow, carrying the silt, the pebbles, and the boulders at about the same rate and on about the same level. The method has the effect of making the author of the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" as important as the author of "Walden," or Bayard Taylor almost as interesting as Herman Melville. Certain major themes are in fact developed in these books: the importance of the Jeffersonian tradition, and the ingrained nativism of the radical strain which has united almost all our great writers, from the conservative-seeming Washington Irving, through Herman Melville, to Van Wyck Brooks himself. But the treatment of these men and events never changes: the same mellow autumnal glow plays over the same scene, and through the mist of hillocks in the foreground look as big as the mountains that tower behind them. On its own terms, Mr. Brooks's history is almost flawless; but that perfection is a little monotonous. If he lets us down occasionally, he might lift us up more often.

Yet, when all is said and done, Mr. Brooks's achievement remains a prodigious one, conceived with audacity and carried out with extraordinary skill. In reading his literary history, one has a sense that Mr. Brooks has repeopled the American continent. On his benign Judgment Day, the dead arise from their graves, throw off their shrouds, and become flesh and blood again, ready to take their place in eternity. The writer who in his youth called for a usable American past has, in the full tide of maturity, created that past for us; and has shown us that it was far richer, far sweeter, far more significant than we could, in our rebellious, dissident, adolescent days have dreamed of. To the writer who has accomplished this great feat, we owe unending admiration and gratitude, and to him we should freely give our love, too, a love that is all the fuller because he himself has evoked so much in our past that is lovable.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 710)

HENRY S. CANBY:
*AMERICAN MEMOIR**

For a million copies sold no longer made a literary reputation —indeed, it was quite possible to sell a million copies of a sentimental romance without getting any reputation at all among the critical and the discriminating.

**Of literature in the 1940's.*

Shelley's Mary

MARY SHELLEY'S JOURNAL. Edited by Frederick L. Jones. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press. 1947. 257 pp. $4.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE CHIEF virtue of this volume is that now, for the first time, in the words of the editor, "the most important single document in Shelley biography" has been "made easily accessible" in completeness and by itself, and not as it has formerly been available, "piecemeal by Mary Shelley, Lady Jane Shelley, Dowden, Mrs. Marshall, Newman Ivey White, and others." Originally it was a part of "Shelley and Mary" (in four volumes), privately printed by Sir Percy and Lady Shelley, the book consisting of "all the papers in their large collection which they regarded as possessing biographical significance." Letters by Shelley and Mary and their circle were included, and the whole became a mine for biographers, particularly Dowden, who was chosen to write the authoritative life. He printed large portions of Mary's journal and quoted from it. Only twelve copies of "Shelley and Mary" were printed. In the United States there is a photostat of Dowden's copy, made by the Modern Language Association, in the Library of Congress. The text of the present edition of Mary's journal is taken from that rotograph, and the editor believes it to be virtually complete.

(*Continued on page* 45)

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History. *Frederick Turner's 1893 paper on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" was a belated recognition by American historians of the importance of westward expansion in our entire history. There is something of the frontier in every corner of American history, as the four books reviewed below demonstrate. For nearly half our history the British colonies, explored in Louis Wright's study, germinated in the East, then burst westward across the mountains as the Revolution broke. Slavery, covered in Professor Franklin's history of the Negro, made expansion into the Southwest possible but foisted upon us our great minority problem. DeVoto's "Across the Wide Missouri" pictures the fur traders who helped to open the Far West to penetration. Last to be subdued, and still unconquered, were the Western plains, the dust bowl country of Johnson's "Heaven's Tableland."*

The Wild and Furry West

ACROSS THE WIDE MISSOURI. By Bernard DeVoto. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1947. 485 *pp.* $10.

Reviewed by DALE L. MORGAN

Oh, Shennydore, I love your daughter.
Away, you rolling river!
I'll take her across the yellow water.
Away, away, I'm bound away
Across the wide Missouri.

IT MUST surely be Bernard DeVoto's favorite ballad, for he has hardly written a book in fifteen years in which he has not hummed a bar or two of it or sung it full-voiced, and now he has written a book, in many respects his best, in which he has given himself up to it wholly and hied himself across the wide Missouri to the country of prodigy and fable.

This extraordinary book is an account of the climactic years of the American fur trade, the years between 1832 and 1838 when the Rockies swarmed with mountain men, British and American army officers on dubious enterprises, joyous-hearted pleasure-seekers, dedicated (and difficult) men and women carrying the banners of Christ to Oregon, and by no means least, the copper-skinned people who had been there from time immemorial. Mr. DeVoto's object is to describe the mountain fur trade as a business and as a way of life, inquiring into its characteristic experiences, the conditions that governed them, the manner in which it shaped our heritage, its relation to the western expansion of the United States, and most of all, how the mountain men lived. Out of this endeavor has come a panoramic and truly fascinating book.

Not wholly, however, because of the informed and graphic text. "Across the Wide Missouri" is illustrated with ninety-six pages of watercolor paintings—thirty-two pages in full color—and these illustrations, which account for the relatively high price of the book, are nothing less than wonderful. Most are the work of the young Baltimore painter, Alfred Jacob Miller, who was taken to the mountains in 1837 by the Scottish sportsman, William Drummond Stewart. Miller was the only painter who got to the Rockies before darkness closed down upon the day of the mountain man; he got there just at sunset, and no one who is in any way interested in the farther West can be anything but spellbound by his sketchbook. The illustrations (which also include three by the more celebrated George Catlin, and ten by the gifted Charles Bodmer, who accompanied Prince Maximilian up the Missouri in 1833) almost overshadow Mr. DeVoto in his own book, a feat which always takes a certain amount of doing.

"Across the Wide Missouri" differs somewhat in tone and content from anything Mr. DeVoto has heretofore written, and inevitably it challenges comparison with his great book, "The Year of Decision: 1846," which has about as much chance as any work that has been written in our time of surviving as a Western classic. The new book is not a *tour de force* as was the earlier history; it is less dramatic, less swift-paced, and less coruscating. Nevertheless, in many respects it is superior as a work of history; it exhibits Mr. DeVoto as less a master of ceremonies aggressive with his opinions, and more the master of materials which he is content to have speak for themselves, though he has by no means abandoned his privilege of passing judgment.

At the same time, this history of certain years and certain elements in the era of the fur trade is conceived on about as wide a base as possible. Though Mr. DeVoto, like everyone who works in this field, has reason to appreciate the pioneer labors of Edwin L. Sabin, the biographer of Carson, in this book for the first time, on the level of art, we have something like an integrated social history of the fur trade.

Nominally Mr. DeVoto has centered his book around Captain William Drummond Stewart, half-pay officer of the British army and veteran of Waterloo, who spent six completely fulfilled years in the mountains in the Thirties. Not enough is known about Stewart to make him an entirely satisfactory unifying device, however, and it is not any one personality or group of personalities but Mr. DeVoto's rousing intelligence and fascinated interest in the multifarious facets of mountain life which give

—*From the book.*

"The Bear Dance," by George Catlin.

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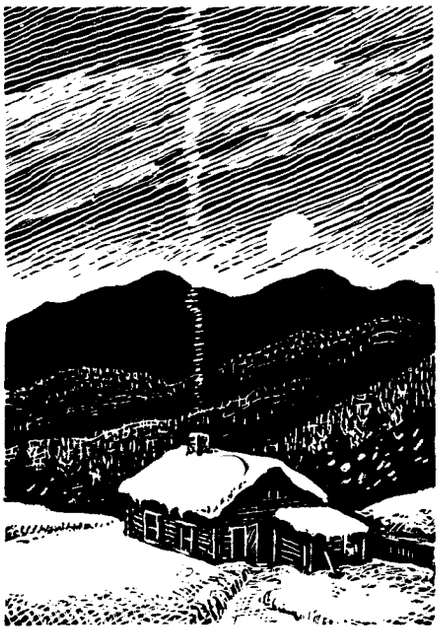
"Across the Wide Missouri" its inner coherence.

The complex character of the Indian mind, with all its governing rituals and taboos, gives rise to many of the book's best passages. Others are concerned with the manners and experiences of the mountain men; with life at the fixed posts on the upper Missouri and the Columbia; with the resilient and indefatigable Marcus and Narcissa Whitman (the portrait of the disturbing Narcissa will be long remembered) and the other Oregon missionaries, maladjusted and complexly unhappy as they all were; with the destruction wreaked upon the Plains tribes by the smallpox epidemic of 1837-38, an account moving in its horror and its pity. One could go on indefinitely listing passages where Mr. DeVoto's ripened experience and matured art are exhibited at their best—altogether, a bountiful and illuminating book.

This is not, of course, a history of the fur trade as such; Mr. DeVoto disclaims at the outset any intention of writing one, and it is to be hoped that someone will be encouraged to tackle the monumental labor that the writing of such a modern history will entail. "Across the Wide Missouri" would have benefited from a little tough-minded cutting; and in its effort to keep in focus the occurrences spread over seven years of time and something like a third of the continental area of the United States, Mr. DeVoto has sometimes blurred his total picture. There are also the errors in detail which are the sad lot of anyone who attempts to organize a book out of the refractory materials of fur trade history. But this is a noble work which will have a fertilizing effect upon all future thinking and writing about the early Far West, and we have reason to thank Mr. DeVoto and Mrs. Mae Reed Porter, the discoverer of Alfred Miller.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Frederic Henry, in "A Farewell to Arms," by Ernest Hemingway. 2. Sir Montague Merlin, in "The Wages of Virtue," by P. C. Wren. 3. "Othello," by William Shakespeare. 4. Julio Desnoyers, in "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," by Vicente Blasco Ibáñez. 5. Robert Jordan, in "For Whom the Bell Tolls," by Ernest Hemingway. 6. Sam Ginsberg, in "Whear ha' ye ben, My Laddie," by MacKinlay Kantor. 7. Sir Henry Curtis, in "King Solomon's Mines," by H. Rider Haggard. 8. "Quentin Durward," by Sir Walter Scott. 9. "David, the King," by Gladys Schmitt. 10. Maurice de Saxe, in "A Day of Battle," by Vincent Sheean.



Young America

THE ATLANTIC FRONTIER: Colonial American Civilization, 1607-1763. By Louis B. Wright. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1947. 354 *pp.* $4.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND WALTERS, JR.

IN "The Atlantic Frontier" Louis B. Wright set out to write the sort of book which most Americans badly need to read—a brief account of civilization in the thirteen colonies which became the United States, derived from the latest scholarship. To attempt to understand contemporary America without knowing something of its colonial heritage is as futile as to try to understand a man without knowing something about his youth. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries together comprise nearly half the span of time in which white men have lived in North America. During those years our basic institutions and the philosophy that prevails today were shaped in large measure.

What most Americans know about their colonial past they learned in school, and if they left school during the past twenty-five years they learned pathetically little; for even in the classroom it has become the fashion to dismiss the subject with a few words. If their school days ended more than twenty-five years ago, what still lingers in their memories are likely to be now discredited notions, such as that religious persecution was the dominating factor in the colonization of America, and that Virginia was settled by the younger sons of the first families of England.

Although general interest in the colonial period has been sagging in recent years, a small band of able scholars has been diligently ransacking the archives and rewriting history on the basis of their discoveries. The Thirties were especially fruitful, with the publication of monographs and specialized studies by Charles M. Andrews, Lawrence H. Gipson, Thomas J. Wertenbaker, Carl Bridenbaugh, Perry Miller, and others. Their contributions have been skilfully brought together within the covers of single volumes by Curtis Nettels and Max Savelle. But these are textbooks for advanced students, formidable for all but the most intrepid layman.

To "The Atlantic Frontier" Dr. Wright brings a lucid, attractive literary style and the rich background of a man who has devoted years of study to English intellectual and Virginia colonial history. His method is to devote a chapter to each of the regional groups of colonies, first narrating the organization of the colonizing companies, the making of the first settlements, and the struggles for control of the government, then describing cultural activity as revealed in the church, schools, press, and theatre. He is in particularly good form in his sections on New England and Virginia, deftly synthesizing the findings of the numerous specialists on the former, and drawing upon his own matured conclusions about the latter. In two chapters, certainly the most original and stimulating in the book, Dr. Wright uses broad strokes. In the opening chapter he sketches the economic conditions and intellectual climate in England which impelled the expansion to North America; in the concluding chapter he sets forth the forces which during the eighteenth century transformed colonists into Americans and caused them to seek political independence from the mother country.

In the greater part of his book Dr. Wright's approach to the colonial era is fundamentally similar to that employed by John Fiske and his contemporaries. He has merely hung the most recently harvested fruits of scholarship upon a concept of colonial history that was standard in the late nineteenth century.

It is a pity that besides the newer scholars' facts, Dr. Wright did not adopt some of the rewarding approaches they have suggested: to view the thirteen colonies as part of a great English empire which in turn was part of the expansion of Europe; to view, as far as practicable, the thirteen colonies as a single unit, so that the significant trends common to them all may emerge; to trace the evolution of tensions between the older- and newer-settled sections of each colony, one of the fundamental

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causes of the Revolution; to give attention to the way less privileged classes lived and worked.

To treat all these complex themes adequately, Dr. Wright would have had to produce a far longer book than "The Atlantic Frontier." But if he was unwilling to write at the length necessary for a well-rounded history, he might have given us another kind of volume for which there is equally great need. He could have omitted most of the detailed political narrative (which has been told fully and well many times before), and concentrated on a single theme—that Old World traditions and institutions were transported across the Atlantic, only to be modified by conditions on the new frontier. He mentions it a number of times, but fails to develop it systematically. The analytical sections of "The Atlantic Frontier" make it clear that he is capable of an excellent volume on this theme.

Moral Pivot

FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: A History of American Negroes. By John Hope Franklin. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1947. 622 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by ALAIN LOCKE

WITH this significant volume, John Hope Franklin has made several constructive and timely contributions to the history of the American Negro. One, the most welcome and important, is to have integrated the story of this minority group with the general context of American history, of which it then becomes a vital and by no means insignificant part. Another is to have achieved, more definitely than any previous general narrative in this field, that objectivity which the best historical scholarship requires. A third is to have been successfully comprehensive in carrying the story from early African origins through to the present day, and even to have included, though necessarily in sketchy outline, not only the story of the Negro in the United States but in Canada, the West Indies, and South America as well. These merits will undoubtedly combine to make "From Slavery to Freedom" the most useful and enlightening historical handbook available on the American Negro.

The history of any minority group entails difficulties and pitfalls comparable to those the minority itself faces. Initially it must offset the neglect and disparagement stemming from its exclusion from standard history, and so has inevitable roots in polemic and counterpropaganda. Only gradually can it work its way

from partisan defense and from catering to minority pride and self-respect to a broader perspective and to more objective and balanced judgment. With this in view, what is surprising is not the large amount of Negro historical scholarship that has been unduly counterbiased, but the considerable amount that has succeeded in making noteworthy and generally acceptable contributions. From the time of J. W. C. Pennington's "Textbook of the Origin and History of the Colored People" (1841) and Wm. C. Nell's "Services of Colored Americans in the Wars of 1776 and 1812" (1853) there have been notable instances. But even in such indisputably scholarly works as George W. Williams's "History of the Negro from 1619 to 1880," Dr. William E. B. DuBois's "The Suppression of the Slave Trade" (1896) and his subsequent more popular volumes, "The Negro" (1916) and "Black Folk: Now and Then" (1934), and Carter G. Woodson's pioneering and influential school text, "The Negro in Our History" (1919), there have been unavoidable elements of counterpolemic and occasional alloys of racial chauvinism. In more detailed monographic studies Negro scholars have perforce maintained historical objectivity, nowhere more notably than in the annals of *The Journal of Negro History*, which has appeared quarterly now for some thirty-one years. In the volume here under review, one finds, happily and at last, the same regard for documented fact and similarly desirable restraint and sense of balance and perspective.

When minority history is incisively interpreted, it invariably throws new light on the history of the majority group. In this case, the American Negro's story, past and contemporary, adds important chapters to the social history of our land and, in addition, accents the moral theme in American history. For at all stages, the status of the Negro is at or near the center of the issues and dilemmas of political, economic, and cultural democracy. In succession, as we read the record, we find the Negro the crux of the issue of human rights and freedom, of truly universal suffrage, of the federal control and guarantee of civil rights, of the extension of economic democracy and labor union democratization, and finally of the nation's external reputation for the consistent practice of democracy. In this moral dimension, in fact, Negro history assumes both the dignity and the seriousness of first principles and major issues, to an extent that will be a revelation to those readers who, either through ignorance or bias, have regarded the history of the Negro as a matter of secondary or parochial import. Quite to the contrary, American history itself appears in deeper and more challenging perspective from this angle. On this score many will judge that Professor Franklin has made a worth-while contribution both to general American history and to liberalized social understanding.

Throughout, the documentation and the bibliography add to the usefulness of the book to students. Fortunately, too, a good balance is held between the political, the industrial, and the cultural lines of development special emphasis, with very adequate chapters on the Negro's important contribution in the arts, scholarship, and letters. "From Slavery to Freedom" has before it a path of constructive public serviceableness; it will be a long while until another book in this field supersedes it.

Free Topsoil

HEAVEN'S TABLELAND: The Dust Bowl Story. By Vance Johnson. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. 1947. 288 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL

THIS able book is a history of the Dust Bowl and the conditions and men who periodically create it. The author knows what he is talking about, having spent the full period of the last great drouth in various capacities on the staff of the *Amarillo Daily News*, in the heart of the Dust Bowl country. It was his job to report the farmers' fight against the weather, and he drove some thirty thousand miles a year to get the story.

The book is authoritative, factual, intelligent, and readable, holding one's keen interest from start to finish. Though the author makes one or two slight fumbles in the early Indian history of the region, his chronicle as a whole is very sound and well documented. He always approaches us with an idea in one hand and an example or lively anecdote in the other. His story never falters.

The Dust Bowl, of course, is not a place but a recurring condition, caused partly by weather but (according to

(*Continued on page* 29)

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Fiction. *The world seems grim enough as it is revealed in five of the seven books of fiction reviewed this week. There are two outstanding but bitter novels of rural life, Jan Valtin's story of the harsh treatment suffered by two aliens who have illegally fled to America for refuge and Fynette Rowe's account of a family's persecution in upper New York State. The brilliant English novelist Elizabeth Taylor reveals the drab and furtive lives of the people who inhabit a seaside resort. A collection of four French stories that emerged from France during the occupation adds a touch of glamor and heroism to universal tragedy and inhumanity. The necessary relief is furnished by Simeon Strunsky's gentle and entertaining evaluation of some of the calmer aspects of American life and by C. F. Ramuz's epic of love and endurance in the Swiss mountains two centuries ago. However the best-seller lists indicate the public still prefers historical novels thick enough to sit on.*

Shades of Hamilton and Jefferson

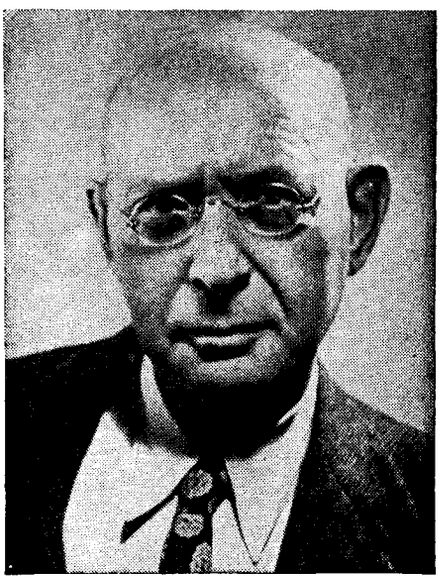
TWO CAME TO TOWN. By Simeon Strunsky. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1947. 219 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

PEOPLE commonly say that whatever liberties the Russians lack in the Soviet system, they retain the right of self-criticism. Reporters say further that this right is fully exercised, and strongly imply that self-criticism is something peculiar to the Russian state. They even hint that other countries — for example, the United States—might well afford to take a leaf from the Soviet book.

As nobody knows how much self-criticism is healthy in a given culture, argument that Americans ought to practise more self-criticism may go on forever. But the assumption that self-criticism—and rather savage self-criticism—is a unique possession of the Communist state is an assumption contrary to fact. Nothing is more characteristic of American literature than the amount of self-criticism, and rather savage self-criticism, it contains. To go no farther back than the early years of the Republic, Brackenridge's "Modern Chivalry" is about as severe on the democratic state as any Tory could be. Cooper's "social" novels are often diatribes. Emerson and Thoreau are quite as biting about their own country as is any Russian about his; and the tone of comment from Poe to H. L. Mencken is not flattering to republican self-esteem. The vogue of Henry Adams among young intellectuals implies a quality of dissatisfaction with the republican state and with a democratic culture that ought to alarm self-anointed guardians of political purity. The total impact upon the European imagination of such American writers as Upton Sinclair, Jack London, Thomas Wolfe, Ernest Hemingway, Erskine Caldwell, William Faulkner, and James T. Farrell is to create a most extraordinary cartoon, compounded of Uncle Sam, Uncle Shylock, Li'l Abner, Tarzan, and the creepy creations of Mr. Charles Addams. Amid all this uproar the voice of reasonableness seems lost.

Or would be lost if it were not for Simeon Strunsky. Mr. Strunsky has no profound theories of the state. I do not know whether he is a Keynesian economist. I suppose he has read Toynbee and Spengler, and for aught I know, Schopenhauer, von Hartmann, and Max Nordau. But while *The Nation* voices dismay and *The New Republic* views with alarm, while *The New Masses* thunders on the left and Merwin K. Hart threatens on the right, Mr. Strunsky has been off observing the habits of Americans with regard to traffic signals. Americans seem to respect traffic signals. They seem to feel that they are intelligent inventions which do a great deal of good in the way of preserving life and property and preventing traffic jams and profanity. I do not know that the regulation of traffic in the United States proves anything for the left or anything for the right, but I am attracted by Mr. Strunsky's calm assumption that it does prove something about the center. It indicates, amid the general uproar, that there may be some good things even about the United States. For example, even when two empty roads cross, a single car waits until the green light comes on—without a policeman in sight.



Simeon Strunsky freshly states the obvious.

A traffic episode happens near the opening, of Mr. Strunsky's latest book, "Two Came to Town," in which the shades of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson return to New York as delegates to the United Nations from Hyperia, or the United States as it used to be. Mr. Hamilton, or as Mr. Strunsky calls him, Mr. Alexander, is much struck by the self-regulating patterns of the Republic. He also finds the traffic cop polite, which I rarely do, but we will let that pass. The point is that obedience to traffic signals, a commonplace in America, is one of those obvious things always getting overlooked in heated controversy about the future of civilization in these states.

As Mr. Strunsky, a modest man, would be the first to deprecate any talk that "Two Came to Town" is a literary masterpiece, I shall imitate him and say it is not. It is perhaps a shade too amiable in its evocation of Messrs. Jefferson and Hamilton, and a touch too arch in regard to the family life of taxicab drivers and the pleasures of getting lost in subways. But when I contemplate the patience and persistence with which Mr. Strunsky in a series of books has courteously reminded his fellow countrymen that, after a couple of centuries, they have perhaps evolved a few comforts and acquired a few virtues, I feel that Mr. Strunsky has for years been saying something that needs to be said. I do not mean to imply with Howells that the smiling aspects of life are necessarily the more American, but I do mean to say that in a volume like "The Living Tradition," which he brought out in 1939, and in other articles and volumes like this present one, he has done that most extraordinary thing, he has freshly stated the obvious—the kind of obvious thing that everybody forgets or doesn't weigh or fails to evaluate. I suspect historians are

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going to owe a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Strunsky, which, as is often the case in such matters, they will play with an even deeper silence.

At Harvard University there is a fund called the Grant Fund for the study of normal boys. I am told that a normal boy is so great a rarity that when they caught one, two or three years ago, they put him through so many tests as to reduce him to the abnormal majority. Mr. Strunsky is that rarity, a normal observer of American things. That is what makes him unique.

Illegal Alien

CASTLE IN THE SAND. By Jan Valtin. New York: Beechhurst Press Co. 1947. 495 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

JAN VALTIN, as you may remember, is the author of "Out of the Night," that grisly autobiographical account of a man who had suffered persecution at the hands of both the Nazis and their Communist foes. It was one of the first books in this country to expose the methods of the international Communist underground, and as such met with some disbelief at that time. You also may recall the newspaper reports on the troubles Mr. Valtin got himself into as an illegal immigrant to this country; ironically, his status had been detected as he stepped into the limelight of bestsellerdom. Meanwhile his distinguished war service in the Pacific made him an American citizen.

Yet he appears not to have forgotten the ordeal he went through when he may have hoped to have reached the end of his trials. Stripped of its more melodramatic elements, his present novel deals with the tragedy of illegal immigrants, and it is visibly written right off his chest.

—Walker-Vance.

Is Jan Valtin saying that the struggle of decent men against totalitarianism "has outgrown the Western concept of legality"?

If ever there were pioneers, his protagonists are such. With undaunted courage and with inventiveness and the hardest of toils these two foreigners—the German Daniel Bortfelt, alias Daniel Braun, and Katrina, his Flemish wife—build their home out of nothing, and make fertile again an abandoned orchard. But when the Law lays its heavy hand on them, their pioneering counts for nothing. "We are not interested in farms," the investigating official tells Daniel as he begs to be released for picking time, "we are interested in you as an illegal alien."

Unfortunately—for Mr. Valtin's hero as well as his novel—Daniel is not just any illegal alien. He is sought for "murder committed in Hamburg, Germany, and robbery and murder committed in Ghent, Belgium." He is innocent of the latter crime, a victim of foul play, and as to the Hamburg murder, the truth is that he has slain a Nazi guard on his escape from the prison into which he was thrown for helping a Jewish boy to get out of the country. Still the peculiarity of Daniel's case mars the effectiveness of the humanitarian plea inherent in the tragedy that comes to a violent close on Ellis Island.

Perhaps Mr. Valtin wanted to say more. Perhaps he wanted to prove that the desperate struggle of decent men for survival in the jungle of totalitarianism has outgrown the Western concept of legality altogether. His Daniel Braun belongs to the family of Georg Heisler in "The Seventh Cross" and of Ravic in "Arch of Triumph." But I'm afraid Mr. Valtin's power is not quite up to the task of presenting this *bon sauvage* of Europe's twentieth-century wilderness. Which, in turn, accounts for the defiant roughness of the pre-American experiences of his two main characters, involving much unnecessary ugliness, and the crudity of his plot that uses the shop-worn ghosts-of-the-past technique to bring the novel to a climax.

There are some moving love scenes in his book—doubly moving, if not doubly convincing, because of the horrible record of the two lovers. And the pioneers' story is told with a gusto which betrays the author's uncommon familiarity with his adopted country. On that score Mr. Valtin does better than any immigrant writer I know of. I suspect that this will not be his last book about the rural American scene.

Elizabeth Taylor achieves "the austere economy of Virginia Woolf and a needle-like *humor, reminiscent of* Huxley."

Chronic Cankers

A VIEW OF THE HARBOR. By Elizabeth Taylor. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 339 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ERIC L. MCKITRICK

ELIZABETH TAYLOR'S new novel places her high above the marketplace. "A View of the Harbor" is one of the most brilliant views of any harbor—within its own spit-to-spit confines—since "South Wind" appeared some twenty-five years ago.

The shabby little English resort town, Newby, is making ready half-heartedly, with a disconcerting gloominess and no perceptible effort, to welcome the few visitors who might turn up for its first post-war season. Up in her room overlooking the harbor, old Mrs. Bracey in her invalid's bed watches over it all. Raucous and demanding, sly and unspeakably coarse, she lets nothing escape her as she lies there, "seeing evil where she could and sensing guilt before it was committed."

"Bloody little atheists," she complains of all who seem to find her company tiresome, "I'll get me reward in heaven. Wonderful comfort I'll get seeing the tables turned . . ." Meanwhile the characters, all too earthly for now, file past. There is bearded Bertram Hemingway, R.N., retired at half-pay, who has come down before the winter is quite over to do a little painting. (He has finally discovered a way to paint whitecaps on waves.) Tory Foyle and Beth Cazabon, who were at school with one another, live in houses side by side, and are approaching middle age together, though it has not quite caught

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up with Tory. A divorcee, restless and still beautiful, she chafes in her exile away from London's gaiety and conceives a passion for Beth's husband Robert, the town doctor, who has watched her furtively for years. Next door, meanwhile, sits Beth, a sentimental novelist, hacking away all day long at her funereal stuff, vague, trusting, and sweetly oblivious to all that goes on.

The widow Lily Wilson, guardian of the Waxworks, has had a drab little life among her ghoulish figures. One evening Bertram gallantly escorts her home and leaves her at the door. As he potters off to other enterprises, Lily begins to apprehend a larger reality in things, and takes to reading nonfiction at the public library and sitting in the pub of an evening, timidly waiting for something to happen. Callers begin to show up at the Waxworks late at night, and Mrs. Bracey strains her eyes furiously in the darkness.

Almost aimlessly, these lives crisscross, but as Mrs. Bracey keeps her Homeric vigil, with Bertram as her only comfort, and as the lighthouse up the coast checks off the seconds through the long nights, a denouement is in the making. Elements plausibly inherent in the situation and in the hearts of the characters shape the story to a legitimate conclusion, which is not really a conclusion, for life at Newby does, of course, dribble on as you might expect.

Any "social significance" in the contemporary sense has been eschewed; the author addresses herself instead to a persistent moral canker which generally outlasts any particular fashion, has done so moreover in the purely artistic manner. It is hard to refrain from literary cross-references in criticizing a book as good as this one, for several come to mind. There are the calmly audacious *non sequiturs* that Stendhal made such good use of in the tug and play of manners—to say deft understatement would be more accurate; there is at once the austere economy of Virginia Woolf and a needle-like humor, reminiscent of Huxley without the venom. But what, I think, is principally laudable is that Mrs. Taylor has conceived her enterprise in cold blood, deliberately fencing in her scope beforehand—and then has made the very most of it. She has compounded of this little set of circumstances, in the center of which is the problem of infidelity, a real tour de force of its kind. The incredibly clever humor that eddies and whips about is never allowed to get out of hand, never becomes an end in itself; the discipline is lean and excisive, and between one spare image and another, fifty tedious words have been omitted. The apparent *non sequiturs* then disappear, and jumping over the gaps becomes for the reader a delightful act of creative understanding. No single character, no matter how minor or regardless of how little is said of him, has been left uncompleted. Given the unique and particular frame of reference, there is no hint of contrivance; it marches by itself. And as the comedy gathers its skirts about more tightly, there is the realization of less and less nonsense and more insistently tough determination than one would ever at first suppose.

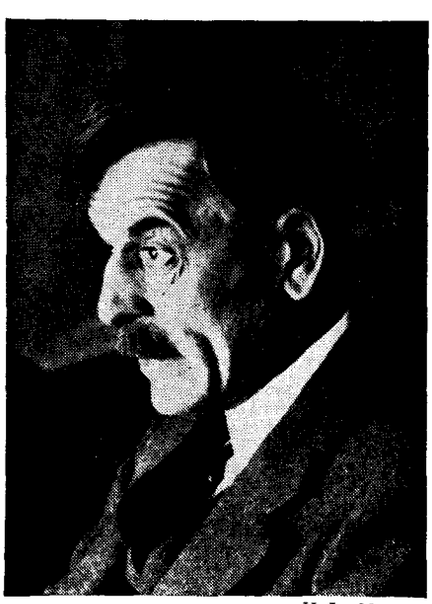
"A View of the Harbor" ought to establish Elizabeth Taylor. This novel shows the results of good hard work; it has been chipped away and polished until it glitters with notable brilliance.

Pastoral Disaster

WHEN THE MOUNTAIN FELL. By C. F. Ramuz. Translated by Sarah Fisher Scott. New York: Pantheon Books. 1947. 221 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

FOR CENTURIES it had been the habit of all but the old men and the women and children of the little village of Aire in Switzerland to take their cows and their goats in midsummer to a lovely sloping valley in the mountains. Derborence was an emerald oasis surrounded by rugged mountains and dominated by an overhanging peak, "The Devil's Tower." There in the pastoral simplicity of their stone huts the men lived and tended their cattle for two months. Two hundred years ago the mountain fell upon them in the night and in a moment under the gray mist of dust there was only a sterile waste of millions of tons of broken rock on which nothing stirred, neither man nor beast nor wild animal. The village had lost its sons, the women their husbands, the children their fathers.



—*H.-L. Mermod.*

Charles Ferdinand Ramuz's novel is "so dramatic, so essentially poetic, that it must remain a classic."

Charles Ferdinand Ramuz has made of this almost legendary disaster a brief novel, so dramatic, so simple, so essentially poetic in style that it must remain a classic among the stories of man's endurance and courage against the blind and implacable ferocity of nature. Except for a few early years of writing in Paris this Swiss novelist had lived his whole life among the villagers and primitive artisans of the Swiss mountains. He knew the beauty and terror of the towering heights and the lives from birth to death of the people who lived in their shadow. He has taken a few lines he had found in an old atlas as his text: "A shepherd missing and presumed dead, spent several months buried in his cabin, living on bread and cheese . . ."

The Antoine of the novel is the shepherd who on a moonlight night looks up to the glittering stars beyond the blue sparkle of glacier ice, and hears the first prodigious roar of the dying mountain. Later he wakes from his sleep, hears the voice of his companion he never finds again, and lies unharmed and alive in a jagged coffin of rock. By luck there is the bread and cheese they had brought with them close at hand and days later his mouth found its way to a trickle of water that flowed through the crevices. For seventeen weeks he burrowed like a mole, until half-naked and gray as death he came to the surface to the clean air and blinding sun. Almost any story of miners buried alive by some disaster has in it the same elements of horror. It is the novelist's handling of the human material that makes a small masterpiece of "When the Mountain Fell." Antoine had been recently married, and there had been delay and difficulty in persuading his young wife's mother to give her consent. After a week in the valley he yearned for her, not knowing that she was waiting for his return to tell him that they were going to have a child. The ancient little village with the church and its inn is built before the reader's eyes house by house, with the clearness and the detail of a primitive painting.

On the night of the disaster the villagers hear the distant thunder of the falling mountain but only the next morning when a dying man is brought down from the valley is the

(*Continued on page* 41)

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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Un-American Is As Un-American Does

WE ARE anti-Communist to the core—though not anti-Russian or anti-human nature. Hence we feared that the Congress's Un-American Committee might afford us little opportunity for comment upon the current investigation. However, their procedure so resembles in some aspects the People's Courts of Nazi Germany, and equivalent investigating commissions in Soviet Russia, that even the most violent anti-Communist, if he is an American, must be appalled. It is clearly within the power of this Un-American Committee to brand any writer or artist as Communist for public inspection, upon merely hearsay evidence, with no opportunity to analyze the charge or bring in counter evidence until the smear has been made to stick. A witness, with a national reputation, though not for brain power, states that he does not like the ideas of the accused, and has heard through a friend who once got drunk with a man who looked like a fellow traveler that the said accused, or someone who looked like him, had been seen at a Communist meeting in 1937. And the Committee allows such libelous statements to get into the headlines unchecked.

This un-Americanism of course broadens the field of attack. Any American who by word or pen has criticized the Government or contracted international relations or belonged to an organization with a different structure from orthodox capitalism can be dragged into a mud bath from which he will not escape without doubt and suspicion following him. The accuser does not have to prove anything. He merely has to assert, and the marks of the brand "Communist" will begin to show red to the popular eye on the most innocent shoulders. If our courts were conducted on such a basis, what circuses they would be for paranoiacs, haters, and crackpots!

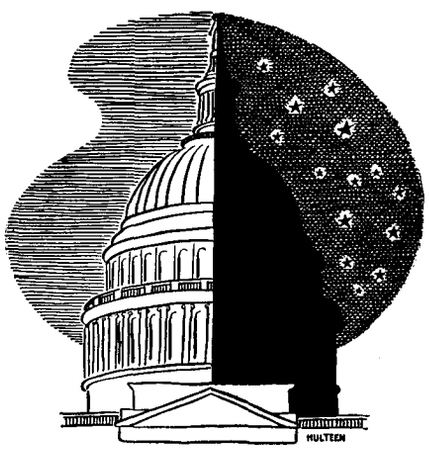
It is only too possible that unless honest citizens protest loud and long, the pattern established by the Un-American Committee will develop along lines already established in totalitarian states. From irresponsible attacks on the living, the committee will go on to irresponsible attacks on the dead, who cannot answer back, even if permitted. Our great American writers are, as it happens, unusually vulnerable to this sneaking form of attack. Here is a list of names that can certainly be made to look smudgy if Mr. Thomas gets his "You-don't-have-to-prove-it" methods at work upon their books. If their radicalism or subversive attitudes toward the government cannot be branded as Communism, it can be made to appear that they would have been Communists if they could!

I. A poor scholar who published an appeal to disobey any law that the citizen felt to be immoral, and charged that our Government was conducted without principle. He defended a fanatic who attacked the rights of property (in human beings) and urged a revolt of the slaves. HENRY D. THOREAU (but he would be a tough defendant).

II. A rich scholar who said that for him conscience was superior to government, and love more important than the efficiency of the Army. RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

III. Two ex-sailors who violently attacked the conduct of their countrys Navy. HERMAN MELVILLE and JAMES FENIMORE COOPER. The latter scurrilously criticized (so it was charged) his country in writing published abroad, and was a close associate of a notorious fellow traveler with French radicalism—LAFAYETTE.

IV. A novelist who was for some time a member of a celebrated Communist organization. NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.



V. Two well-known Americans who admitted that they were deeply influenced and subsidized by a radical affiliated with various radical associations (he was their father) and must (according to the Committee's procedure) be regarded as fellow travelers. HENRY AND WILLIAM JAMES.

VI. A journalist who deserted one organization (the C.S.A.) in order to get a job under another (the U.S.A.). He publicly stated that his greatest fear was that he might become that lowest of human creatures, an American Congressman. MARK TWAIN.

VII. An internationalist whose ideas of democracy included even the Russian definition of the term. He steadily put the welfare of man above the welfare of his country. Radicals all over the world quoted him. WALT WHITMAN.

VIII. A statesman who said that the tree of liberty must be watered every twenty years by the blood of patriots (clearly subversive) and was a prime mover in the Bill of Rights, with its stumbling block for all un-American committees, the right of free speech. THOMAS JEFFERSON. And with him may be pilloried the makers of the constitution of conservative Connecticut, which expressly reserves the right to revolution.

IX. Let us be whimsical, but not more so than our Committee. That great leader who is known to have been in the service of a foreign power. To be sure the power was not foreign when he served it, but a question of time sequence, whether in Russian films when we were allies, or in this instance, does not seem to trouble the Committee. The reference is to GEORGE WASHINGTON.

X. Add WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS, who was a Socialist; HENRY GEORGE, who hit at the soft underbelly of capitalism: BELLAMY, whose "Looking Backward" went far ahead of communism in its proposed reorganization of society; and enough more to dim the glory of American literature if their reputations should be smeared and smirched.

Gentlemen of the Committee, do you think it would have been a better America today if these men of imagination had been officially smeared and harrowed into silence? A government that gives its critics a bad name in order to hang them—well, we have seen two such governments, one now in the ruins of its own despotism, and we say a plague on both their houses, and a double plague on whoever tries to build another like them in the terrorism of smirch and smear.

H. S. C.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Howl for a Sage

SIR: I read my *Review* and have never squawked. You know your business. But at last I am yowling. Specifically over Atkinson's review of Fischer's "Gandhi and Stalin" [*SRL* Oct. 4]. I howl for a review by another sage, not a drama critic who must put condescending drama into his reviews. Mine is a tough stomach, but this review by a master of "Anglo-Saxon traditions of individual rights" (as so ably displayed in that eminent Jeffersonian sheet, the *Times*) made it flop.

Or at least let Fischer rebut.

ROBERT S. HOAGLAND.

Schenectady, N. Y.

SIR: My reply to Dr. Hoagland's letter is, "I pass." I pass to Brooks Atkinson. Except in very flagrant cases, I don't believe an author should argue with a reviewer, and I was quite pleased with his review of "Gandhi and Stalin." If Gandhi were commenting, however, I think he would point out to Mr. Atkinson that he is, above all, a man of action and that it is somewhat incorrect, therefore, to contrast him with Lincoln on this score. Lincoln was a man of faith and action; so is Gandhi. More than anything, Gandhi symbolizes the unity between personal morality and political action. This is where the West, and in fact the world, is weak.

LOUIS FISCHER.

New York, N. Y.

Community Bystanders

SIR: Struthers Burt need have no fear of being challenged to sacrifice a tithe of his remaining years as he offered, writing in the *SRL* Oct. 11, if he could become ". . . convinced that 'millions of my fellow countrymen burned with instant and active rage at every hint of [racial] prejudice, intolerance, and injustice . . . [or knew] that most of them even knew what Nazism was . . ."

LaSalle, Ill., my own community is a case for study. Here we have no ghetto, no black belt and no Deep South tradition. There has never been a pogrom during our 110 years of history: it had its share of volunteers during the Civil War, and its citizens are proud of the long list of soldiers in both world wars.

Yet I submit that we are a solid community of bystanders (the charitable term for Mr. Burt's conception of Nazis) and that we indict ourselves as such by proving to be a tight, self-righteous jury who blindly pass innocence on our own base intolerance.

This is why. Several weeks ago a woman, en route to another state, passed through LaSalle accompanied by a young Negro couple in her employ. Trying one restaurant after another during the stopover, the young colored people were denied a meal until they were served finally out of sight in a small room. Their mistress complained bitterly to the Chamber of Commerce, that "in twentieth-century America . . . in a community of the Emancipator's home state, a condition like this could prevail."

She drew this answer: "You see, when they built the [Illinois and Michigan] canal through this territory, there were many Negroes who worked on that project and most of them were the 'bad kind' who got into fights, stabbings, and other escapades that since have marked their race." These were the words our single local daily reproduced.

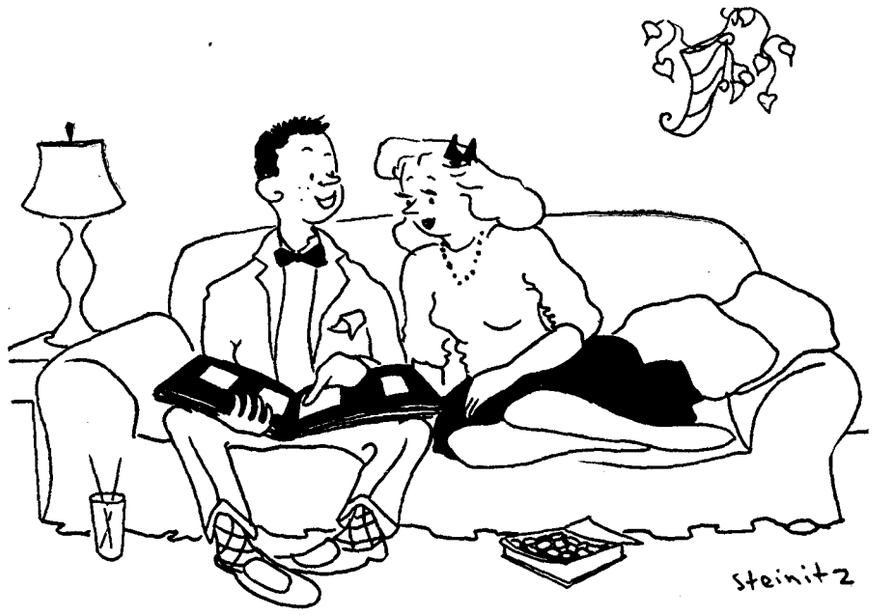
There was no other complaint. I called on the city attorney. The mayor was next. He professed complete innocence as well as indifference. Next I tried the newspaper. I was addressing the wind.

I grew up in this town without once seeing a Negro and yet I learned, without a single refutation, that those people were good only for enslavement and hatred; that they did not merit the kindness we reserved for stray dogs; that they stank, were incorrigibly backward, and specialized in rape and escapades. . . .

Had I not, while living in Chicago, learned to know Negroes on my own account, then I would myself be one of this jury of mute indifference—another dupe in this legion of 30,000 bystanders, who, in consonance with Mr. Burt's conviction, are ripe for the evil dynamic force which can sweep humanity into the abyss of Nazi darkness.

D. M. PIZZUTI.

LaSalle, Ill.



"This is me at eighteen, when I was commanding my bomber squadron."

Wanted: Picture Editors

SIR: In the course of the article "If We Could Start a Newspaper," by 9 Nieman Fellows [*SRL* Sept. 27] appears this statement: "Newspapers, thanks to the picture magazines, are printing more and more pictures, but there has been no noticeable improvement in their quality." A few lines further along the article says, "With the plenitude of photographers on tap since World War II, it is impossible to understand why papers print pictures in the style that prevailed before World War I."

As one who has worked for many years in the field of photographic journalism, I think I can explain this. The trouble lies in the lack of good picture editors. Too often the job of picture editor is done in odd moments by a busy city editor. If the paper or press association has a full-time picture editor he is often a man who has proven a misfit in another department. Knowledge of photography or understanding of pictures is rarely a qualification.

This man hastily picks up a few catch-words and photographic "axioms" from darkroom boys or cameramen, remembers a few pictures he has seen used in certain orthodox ways in other publications, and proceeds to become an expert picture editor.

Part of the trouble also lies with the average press photographer. Although these men are considered hardboiled, I know most of them to be highly sensitive. They are also lazy. If their picture editor shows a liking for photographic clichés, why should they bother to use a lot of originality which will not be appreciated? That is their attitude, yet, in the hands of an editor who encourages extra effort with praise, by-lines, and bonuses, any good press photographer will do his utmost.

Photo journalism in the United States has been and is at an exceedingly low level, but it is not the fault of the cameramen. We need more trained picture editors, and journalism schools should offer courses in this highly specialized work.

Similar criticism could be made of most of the books being published today which use photographs for illustrations. Many books "lavishly illustrated with photographs" look as if the office boy had assembled, cropped, and scaled them. I should think most big publishing houses

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could afford to maintain an experienced picture man as a full-time member of their staffs. The resulting improvement would more than cover the salary by increased sales and satisfaction, not only with the occasional picture book but in improvements in any publication which uses photographs.

Editors of pictures are even more important today than editors of the text if balance between the two is preserved.

KIP ROSS.

Washington, D. C.

High-Noon Shadow

SIR: I would like to offer a footnote to your reference [*SRL* Oct. 11] to "those giants who seem only to have lived in the past, who were able to be great as writers and at the same time to command large audiences." Such writers always seem "to have lived in the past" because they are never detectable in the present.

For general, critical good sense on literary matters, I would say that Samuel Daniel and Ben Jonson were as good men as could be found in Shakespeare's day. Daniel produced his "Philotas" on the stage the same year as "Hamlet," and did it to please "the better sort of men, seeing with what idle fictions and gross follies the stage at this day abused men's recreations." Four years later, when all Shakespeare's tragedies and nearly all his comedies had been produced, Jonson was still taking the same gloomy view of the current literary output. He wrote "Volpone" to correct the fact that there was in "stage-poetry nothing but ribaldry, profanation, blasphemy" and he hoped to "raise the despised head of Poetry again." And, of course, John Webster's opinion of Shakespeare is notorious. He classed him as a writer with Thomas Heywood.

I think it is an accident when a great writer is successfully detected by his contemporaries. After all, at high noon a giant's shadow is no longer than any other man's.

MARCHETTE CHUTE.

New York, N. Y.

Shocked Publisher

SIR: As an editor in a publishing house, I was shocked at a letter and form received from *Library Journal* recently requesting information about forthcoming fall titles. *Library Journal* is a magazine which, I believe, reaches the more important libraries in the United States. I have always assumed that libraries were set up to make available to the citizens of this country works of lasting value and covering a wide range of subjects. Yet according to their letter, *Library Journal* wants information only about fiction for which the publisher has allocated $5000 in initial advertising, and which they accordingly classify as *important!* Does this mean that in the field of fiction public libraries are to duplicate the services of the circulating lending libraries in providing only fiction for which there is the greatest demand at any given moment? If serious fiction (only some of which receives a high budget appropriation) is not to be made available to the general public, through the public libraries, then how can we encourage truly creative and original fiction writing, and how can such books reach the vast audience which cannot afford to buy books regularly? Is fiction by definition to be regarded as a sort of current hard-covered periodical which is of no use unless the circulation reaches a given quota? Is this the way in which book information "is geared to modern library buying"?

It is my understanding that at the present time the State of New York spends an average of $.07 per capita per year on books for its inhabitants. There is no regimentation like self-regimentation. Why don't we have libraries order only books with a $50,000 to $100,000 advertising appropriation? In this way the library might find it hard to order only one or two fiction titles per year.

BERNARD B. PERRY.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: *Library Journal*, and certainly U. S. librarians, are in complete sympathy with what seems to be Mr. Perry's primary complaint, namely, the feeling that, with books, as with people, "money talks."

This is precisely why *Library Journal* carried over 1800 book evaluations in the past year, by librarians, for librarians, most of them in advance of publication. In making these appraisals our 200 reviewers were not influenced by, and in most cases were not even informed as to, publishers' promotion plans.

However, in our Fall Announcement Number, reviewing publishers' plans for the rest of the year, we are going to devote a page or so to saying, "Here, as nearly as we are able to determine, are the fiction titles which publishers have decided to place at the top of their promotion lists."

Libraries exist to serve their public. This means they must endeavor to have the books which their public will ask for, and have them on publication date. Later, when we receive advance galleys, these books will be evaluated without reference to the promotion planned for them. In the meantime, librarians can be relied upon to give no more than due weight to this preliminary information in the light of their own experience with each author and publisher.

As it happens, we shall not base this listing on publishers' appropriations, since too few publishers are willing to give out advance information of this sort. (Preliminary ad appropriations are often revised up or down in the light of republication reactions from booksellers and critics.) The list has been prepared on the basis of the experience of *Library Journal's* editorial advisers.

I think Mr. Perry need not worry about the public libraries concerning their support for fiction of limited market. A jobber's comment on this point is enlightening. He mentions that libraries are a much heavier factor in his sales of books of limited market than best sellers.

Incidentally, I think it should be said in defense of publishers that it is not invariably true that the heavy advertising appropriations go to the poor books. It is certainly socially desirable that such books as "Gentlemen's Agreement," "Kingsblood Royal," and "Inside U.S.A." should be on the bestseller lists!

MARGARET ELIASON.
Editor, New Books Appraised
Library Journal

New York, N. Y.

Randolph Bourne Letters

SIR: Alyse Gregory (widow of Llewelyn Powys), former managing editor of the *Dial*, now living in England, is writing a book on Randolph Bourne. Will those who have letters from him, lend them to the undersigned, at 282 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y., who will have them copied and promptly returned.

AGNES DE LIMA.

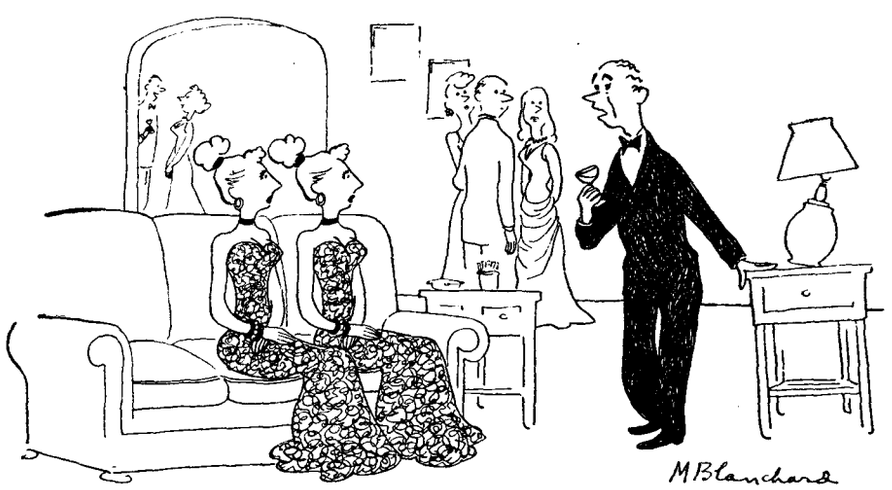
New York, N. Y.

Philosophical Brothers?

SIR: Probably many others far more versed than I in philosophy have objected to your note on page 18 in *SRL* Aug. 23. Henri Bergson seems to have been overrated, even by the infallible Lippmann and even before his (W. L.) apostasy. But how and why do you conclude that Bergson and Sartre are philosophical brothers under the dura mater? Both were French, each living at the end of a war to make the world safe. So what?

THEODORE KAIN.

Minneapolis, Minn.



"My God! Bookends!"

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Ideas and Essays.

The Adams brothers, descended from Presidents and raised under the shadow of statesmanship, nevertheless took little part in public life. Instead, their historical works showed a boldness of generalization which compensated for their inability to fulfill themselves in the tradtional family role of public service. Although Henry is known for his sound "History of the United States" (recently reissued in abridged form as "The Formative Years"), both brothers ranged widely beyond the usual limits of history. The brilliant generalizations of Brooks Adams in economics suffered from the undeveloped state of that science in his time. Economics is still young today, although the pragmatic studies of Lord Keynes, so influential in the New Deal, marked a great advance. Hewes's "Decentralize for Liberty" will be stimulating reading for all those interested in the field.

Pig-Iron, Sugar, and Prophecies

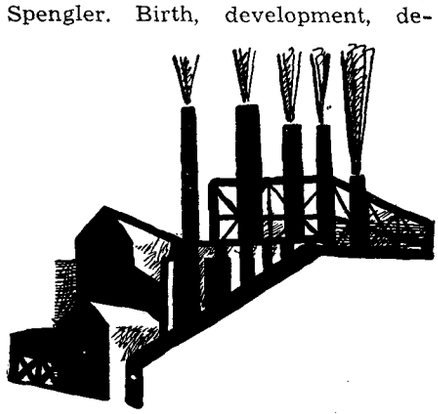
AMERICA'S ECONOMIC SUPREMACY. By Brooks Adams. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 194 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by VINCENT SHEEAN

THE REMARKABLE anticipations of Brooks Adams have been excavated by Mr. Marquis W. Childs and presented to us in this neat but startling little volume. It was originally published in 1900, a period when most of its conclusions seemed so fantastic that they did not induce belief. Since then the author's vision of geopolitical movement has been concretely enacted upon the stage of history, so that it is no longer possible to deny the polarization of empire in the United States and the Soviet Union.

When Adams wrote this essay the great trilogy of Admiral Mahan on sea-power had been less than a decade in print. Sir Halford Mackinder was not known; Spengler had not even begun his work; and the world-historical pundit of the present hour, Arnold Toynbee, was a child. Adams had read Hegel and Marx, obviously, as well as classical history and economics, but the style of his pronouncements, no less than their content, must have been novel to the point of freakishness in 1900. He abounds in inflated phrases like "since the dawn of time," whereas by the context it is clear he only means modern Western culture and only the relatively recent centuries of it. He flings out "the inexorable decree of destiny" and suchlike grandiosities as lightly as if the world were his plaything and all the men and women merely puppets. And through this whole essay there appears a kind of mystical determinism which seems as extreme as the most extreme statements of Hegel or Herbert Spencer or Spengler, but without their philosophical solidity and power. In one passage, for example, we find him declaring that "the migration eastward of the Center of the Continental system . . . occasioned the rise of Germany," whereas the most ordinary common sense would indicate that the rise of Germany occasioned the eastward movement of power. Very often, indeed on every page, "migrations" and "movements" are postulated as if they were ethereal forces of some undefined nature independent of the concrete personae of history.

And yet, for all the unphilosophical tone of this work, it did hit with unrivaled brilliance upon the principal historical kinesis of the twentieth century, the passage of supreme power into the geographical and economic systems of Russia and the United States. Adams anticipated this phenomenon for reasons which are not really clear. At times he argues in purely statistical terms within the frame of reference established by economic determinism, and at other times he charts the movement of history according to some *a priori* morphological concept never fully stated, but strongly suggesting the system developed years later by Spengler. Birth, development, decay, and death are the ideas that haunt this mind, and such morphological phenomena cannot scientifically be transferred from an individual to a society without a greater creative effort, philosophically speaking, than Adams was capable of making. His brother Henry did it better in his theory of acceleration, which also seems to be adopted in this work (along with a great many other notions), without reasonable justification given. Indeed few writers even in a field which by its nature tends to the grandiose and the apocalyptic have outdone Adams in flat, unsupported statements. Professor Toynbee, even in his wildest flights—such as when he tells us that the Minoan culture arose as a response to the challenge of desiccation in North Africa—puts it gently, persuasively, as suggestion rather than as bold fact. Adams hits us over the head.



His thesis is this: the British Empire is, in 1900, far advanced in decay, can no longer exert its influence for the maintenance of peace, has been shown in a variety of ways (Boer war, financial decline, increasing importation of food) to be approaching dissolution. The focus of power is moving both eastward and westward: eastward into Germany and Russia, westward to America. America is, in 1900, about to take Britain's place as financial and commercial capital of the world, and has already distanced all competitors in industrial production. The rival system is the Eurasian land-mass (here we have an anticipation of Mackinder's "heartland") of which the expanding force is Russia. The two systems meet in north China, where the situation exists which may produce war. America cannot refuse "the inexorable decree of destiny," and must prepare to exert its power or lose it.

Much of this is statistically supported, but statistics can never take the place of philosophy. For all its brilliance, the Adams essay leaves us in a complete muddle over what its author's view of the world might be, or how he arrives at his conclusions. Are they, then, merely lucky guesses? If the statistics on pig-iron show that France has irreversibly degenerated, and the statistics on the importation of sugar show that England has done the same, why do not the French statistics on sugar (a steady rise in production) show that France is reviving? If sugar is a criterion for England, why is it not also a criterion for France? In fact, Adams uses statistics the way most people do, as a convenience selectively employed to support processes of thought. It is these processes of thought which are unclear, mystical, and unproved. If it

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so happens that power has concentrated in Russia and the United States, then it so happens. But it does not happen because of any logical process Brooks Adams is able to show us. He places himself, it seems to me, in the category of a lucky fortuneteller, in that however accurate his predictions, they spring like Pallas from the head of Jove and have no fecundating principle of rationale. The arithmetical proofs offered (pig-iron, sugar, export-import balances and the like) seem symptoms of a disease, but the disease itself escapes the analysis.

This kind of writing, which only came into existence towards the end of the nineteenth century, is bound to be developed a great deal more in the years just ahead. Mankind is appalled by the sheer novelty of its world-historical predicament, and the search for precedent, analogy, or any other possible clue to the riddle of human destiny will be pursued with anxiety. We may hope that the Brooks Adams revival can stimulate thought without increasing the mythology of the "inevitable war," but the cold steel of his conclusions gives little encouragement to such hope. In essence, he calls upon us to asume a world-empire and fight for it. It may be that we shall do so, but if so it will not be for any reason he gives.

Pro- and Anti-Keynes

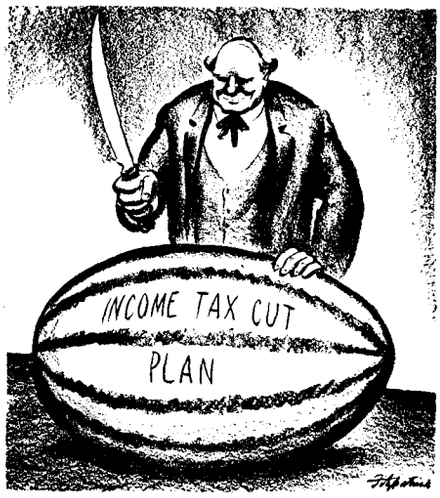
THE NEW ECONOMICS. Edited by Seymour E. Harris. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1947. 686 *pp.* $6.

DECENTRALIZE FOR LIBERTY. By Thomas Hewes. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1947. 238 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by
DAVID CUSHMAN COYLE

THE PERVASIVE, almost romantic influence of Lord Keynes on the political economics of capitalist countries is the subject of Professor Harris's book, which includes his own observations and contributions from many other economists, both pro- and anti-Keynes. The reader who is not at home in economic jargon might well start with the chapters by Ragnar Mirski and Benjamin Higgins, and then proceed to the account of Keynes's lifework by Professor Harris, and to such of the other chapters as he can digest. The story is worth knowing, for Keynes, though he did not invent much that can positively be called new, contributed a surge of new energy to the political thinking of this century that has dragged many an old idea out of the mud.

John Maynard Keynes came up out of the strict sect of the classical economists, pulling one foot after another out of the marsh with a resounding plop, falling into new sloughs of complexity, and manfully struggling on toward his goal. Keynes led an active life in Cambridge University, in government, and in successful private business. In economics his goal was political policy; he was determined to find practical answers to the immediate problems of England, such as German reparations, unemployment, foreign trade, and inflation. His method was to take apart the oversimplified notions of classical economics, and hunt for more realistic descriptions of actual human behavior. So he came to lay stress, for instance, on such ideas as the varying desire to hold cash instead of securities, and went on to his best-known doctrine that "spending" makes prosperity.



—*Fitzpatrick in* St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

"No Favorites!"

But each new classification brought its own complications, and in this book Keynes and the other economists can be seen struggling to keep their feet down and their heads above the tangle. The extraordinary influence of Keynes seems to have come chiefly from his engineering instinct — his stubborn insistence that theoretical purity must not become a drug, that practical answers must be found, even if they are rough approximations. This, the necessary bridge from pure to applied science, is what Keynes labored to build in economics, and is the basis for his position as pontifex in modern economic thought.

Thomas Hewes, like Lord Keynes, is a man of large and successful experience in business and finance, and in government, both in the State of Connecticut and in Washington. Both are shown in these two books as men of immense vitality. But while Keynes harnessed his vast intellectual energies to the dull, herculean task of clearing a practical road through the economic jungle, Hewes will brook no harness, but lays about him with a mighty, homeric exuberance.

"Decentralize for Liberty" is a one-sided title for a many-sided attack on the pains and maladjustments of America. Mr. Hewes has a Jeffersonian affection for small enterprise and hatred for bigness and concentration of power. He would forbid any corporation to engage in more than one kind of business, as defined by his proposed Department of Economics in Washington. He would even go so far as to free the railroads and utilities from all rate regulation for ten years. He hates inequality and special privilege. He would reduce income taxes to a level rate, and would forbid all Federal subsidies, that Connecticut and Mississippi may enjoy equality before the law.

Hewes has a Rooseveltian love for the land of America, and a true and deep concern for the conservation of our soil, water, and mineral resources. With undaunted, almost Gascon, courage he rises to demand the total abolition of the Department of Agriculture, and of the Department of Commerce, the breeding-grounds of Henry Wallace. In the field of housing, Hewes is definitely a New Dealer; he favors a public program of urban redevelopment practically after Alvin Hansen. As he says: "Everybody has to and does live in some place." This appealing and provocative book has something in it for everyone, from Knutson to Mencken.

Where Love Is White and Green

By David Morton

OBSERVE that love can fill
The heart with a small place:
A white house, sleepy, and still,
And set in the slow grace
Of elms on a hill;

And the lawn wearing a light,
Green in the summer sun,
Down to the pickets, white
And pointed, and each one
Individual, and right;

The pasture, swaying now,
Where the long grasses lean
Or straighten, as winds allow,
Is background of moving green
For the white cow. . . .

Observe, it is love's grace
To love, once for all,
And greatly, such a place
As is green and white and small,
Home's very face.

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Personal History.

To judge the true measure of a man, you must take him in all his aspects. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., in his day was a glittering little figure of a wit, poet, toastmaster, and conversationalist. Today it seems probable that his work as a doctor may be judged more important than the flash of his tongue and his verse. And he may even be known simply as the father of Justice Holmes. . . . Romain Rolland produced one incontestably lasting novel, "Jean Christophe," but Rolland was also a dramatist, a biographer, and above all a musician and musicologist. His doctoral thesis for the Sorbonne on early opera is still a definitive work, and his life of Beethoven is still popular. "Jean Christophe" itself is a pioneer study in fiction of the musician in an alien world.

Brahmin Showpiece

AMIABLE AUTOCRAT. A Biography of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. By Eleanor M. Tilton. New York: Henry Schuman, Inc. 1947. 470 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by MAXWELL GEISMAR

THE TWO Holmeses seem to attract the feminine biographers, and maybe the diminutive, effervescent father, the handsome, gallant, and consecrated son set up a particular sort of masculine polarity. The Doctor and the Judge are still fresh in our minds from Catherine Drinker Bowen's "Yankee from Olympus." They retain their interest in Miss Tilton's new study of Oliver Wendell Holmes senior.

As a matter of fact "Amiable Autocrat" corrects some of the obvious exaggerations of Mrs. Bowen's study. In Dr. Holmes's language, it is a "specific" for the sentimentality, the romance à la Michelet, of the previous biography, and it is strong just where "Yankee from Olympus" was weakest. As a medical student at the time of the body-snatchers, as a Harvard professor of anatomy in the days when the dissection room was still considered a chamber of horrors, and when indeed the block and tackle were the chief adornment of the operating theatre, Dr. Holmes was in the midst of the battle for medical reform. But his particular gift, of course, was to be in the midst of, or at least around about, everything that was going on in New England during practically the whole nineteenth century. On the lecture platforms of Springfield, Hartford, or Cambridge; discussing English Versification, Races, Urania, and the Lyrical Passion in the pages of *The Atlantic Monthly;* the perfect master of ceremonies at the Saturday Club, the Peace Jubilee of 1869, or the great

Dr. Holmes "was around about everything going on in New England during practically the whole nineteenth century."

Republican dinner for Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, Oliver Wendell Holmes was the shining light and the special show piece of Brahmin culture in its days of glory. He was a series of Lowell Lectures complete in himself, in verse or prose, while even P. T. Barnum's tattooed man carried his professional endorsement.

Miss Tilton handles this outrageous and perplexing career with a commendable sobriety and a rather neat, dry style, not without humor. In the course of her solid and well-documented scholarly research she manages to throw a lot of cold water on the more extravagant interpretations of Holmes, and to bring the Doctor himself down (or up?) to human size. I have already mentioned her study of Holmes's medical background and work at Harvard. The picture of New England literary life —including such celebrities as Emerson, Longfellow, and Lowell—is equally interesting. Doctor Holmes's own literary productions, the unending stream of scientific articles, topical essays, occasional and familiar verses, the series of "Autocrat" papers, and novels, get thorough treatment.

But Miss Tilton's sturdy emphasis on the "facts" has its own limitations. She may have a case for minimizing the historical movements of the time which lay outside of medicine and Boston. Holmes's own attitude toward the Civil War veered from uncertainty and silence to patriotic jingles; caught up as he was in his own career, the great social issues of the age passed him by. It is curious, though, that "Amiable Autocrat" should exclude so much of Holmes's personal and family relationships as well. The Doctor's real feelings about his son, the Judge, are hardly clarified; there is little mention of the Doctor's wife. Both Holmes's consistent attacks on Calvinistic theology and his recurrent interest in that type of devitalized New England woman for whom his Elsie Venner, orgiastic and amoral, was such a perfect literary foil, also remain ambiguous.

By presenting Doctor Holmes in such a completely factual and "objective" light, "Amiable Autocrat" almost presents him in a sort of psychological vacuum. The misty romanticism of Mrs. Bowen's biography—to return to "Yankee from Olympus" for a moment—is matched here by a rather formal logic. But books breed books, and these two studies of the Holmes family, so antipathetic in tone and contradictory in emphasis, will probably ensure a third.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 229

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 229 will be found in the next issue.

IQUL MGU BXX SBFTYEUGUGF

IQMI IQBHV IQUGU BF HY

XMHS, CQUH IQUL TMH FUU

HYIQBHO PJI FUM.—NGMHTBF

PMTYH.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 228

When the win is in the wit is out.
THOMAS BECON

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For Rolland Readers

JOURNEY WITHIN. By Romain Rolland. Translated by Elsie Pell. New York: Philosophical Library. 1947. 171 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

THIS fragment of an autobiography is for readers who are already interested in Romain Rolland, and familiar at least with his principal works; not for those who wish to make his acquaintance. "Journey Within" is not merely a fragment. It is an impressionistic, sometimes mystical, fragment, the inclusions and omissions of which must be called capricious, written in a prose that frequently spills over into poetry, with rhetorical flights and flourishes that are less alien to French than to English. Miss Pell has worked hard at a difficult job of translation, but I am afraid that she may have worked largely in vain, for I suspect that most persons who will wish to read what Rolland has to say in this book are capable of reading the communication in its original language.

The author writes of his childhood feeling of being imprisoned by life; his sickliness; the profound effect produced upon him by the death of an infant sister; the revelation afforded him by Spinoza, and his loss of traditional Catholic faith; the Burgundian soil from which he sprang, his ancestors, and his relations with his father and mother; his earliest attempts at creative composition; his lifelong passion for music; the impact of Rome upon him; the moment of vision on the Janiculum, when he conceived the idea of Jean Christophe; his crucial friendship with Malwida von Meysenburg; his literary success; and the storm of the First World War which burst upon him, along with some millions of others, just when he had reached the goal towards which he had so long and so devotedly been journeying.

On some of these subjects he writes well and memorably. His portrait of great-grandfather Boniard, whose nature was sufficiently rich to supply substance for the trio of Breugnon, Paillard, and Chamaille, is robust and delightful:

> Every minute of his day was as full as an egg. It never occurred to him that life was not good; that just to be Boniard was not a good thing. He did not go into ecstasies over life; that was not his way. But he would have accepted twice as much of it, had it been offered him.

And the loving reminiscences clustered around the figure of Malwida touch the reader's mind and heart; although I am not sure just how much they would mean to anyone who did not know more of the lady and her influence over her young friend than is told in this book. Malwida, the intimate of Wagner and Nietzsche, of Mazzini and Herzen, held out her cool, calm hand to young Rolland, looked at him affectionately with her wise old eyes, at just the moment when she was most capable of giving aid. It is when the writer has written that doubt descends:

> That was where Malwida's impulse toward love was helpful. Her intelligent heart gave you back your faith in yourself, which you had expended by expressing it. The light, radiated, came back to you in warmth. And the energy of the spirit was recharged with new power. The friend who understands you, creates you.

That last is well said. And so, too, is this of Rome: "She does not give up her secret; perhaps she has none. But she unveils yours for you. Whoever knows her, knows nothing of her, but discovers himself." Yes, there are good things here for the person who would get at the heart of Rolland; but, heaven save us, what a mess of rhetoric besides! And how unfortunate some of the unrestrained author's mixed metaphors can be! For example, he writes of his family tree as a mingling of life-streams, and concludes:

> Near its mouth, the winding river twists among the reeds, already rustling in the sea-air; and slowed down in its course, it dreams of shores whose memory is still reflected in its eyes; of that procession of bygone lives, that sheaf of currents bound together by the divine Reaper in a single bed, and soon to be gathered by him into his barn.

At this kind of writing one can only stare in sad amazement.

This little book raises, of course, the whole question of Rolland's place in literature and the probable future of his reputation. That both will be based on his most famous work, there can be little doubt, although many good critics would place "Colas Breugnon" above the long and often clumsy history of Jean Christophe Krafft. For, whatever clumsiness, whatever tediousness, whatever lack of stylistic grace there may be in the parts of "Jean Christophe," the sum of the parts, the final accumulation, painstakingly arrived at, is great. Its author was never capable again of such a creative exertion; never, after his bitter experience of a war during which he fought to maintain the integrity of his reason, while writers like Barrès were spewing forth hate on one side of the lines, and writers like Thomas Mann, on the other side, were acting as literary storm-troopers in the fight of German Kultur against "Civilization," and were declaring, in Mann's words: "Man deteriorates in peace. Idle rest is the tomb of courage. Law is the friend of the weak, it aims at leveling all; it would reduce the world to a level. War brings out strength."

The effort Rolland made was heroic, the pressures he endured were tremendous. I have long thought that it could be well argued that he was a war casualty. But when he became one, if indeed he did, "Jean Christophe" was already alive in the world; and as to its continuing life I have little doubt.

"It's a good account, but they leave him no artistic freedom."

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Special Studies. *Dr. Rhine of Duke University has for many years been carrying on his controversial experiments in extra-sensory perception and related fields ("Extra-Sensory Perception," 1934, and "New Frontiers of the Mind," 1937). Do we possess other, submerged senses beyond the usual five? Dr. H. L. Yeagley of the State College of Pennsylvania recently proved to his own satisfaction that homing pigeons are guided to their roosts by a strange "feel" that amounts to a sixth sense. Tolerance is needed, especially where the mysterious machinery of thought is concerned. . . . With Russia and America contending for the privilege of feeding Europe, and Congressmen, like pigeons, flocking home from abroad, our need for an improved cultural program should be more obvious now than ever before. "The Cultural Approach" is sound, background reading in this field.*

Jungle of Miracles

THE REACH OF THE MIND. By John B. Rhine. New York: William Sloane Associates, 1947. 224 *pp.* $3.50.

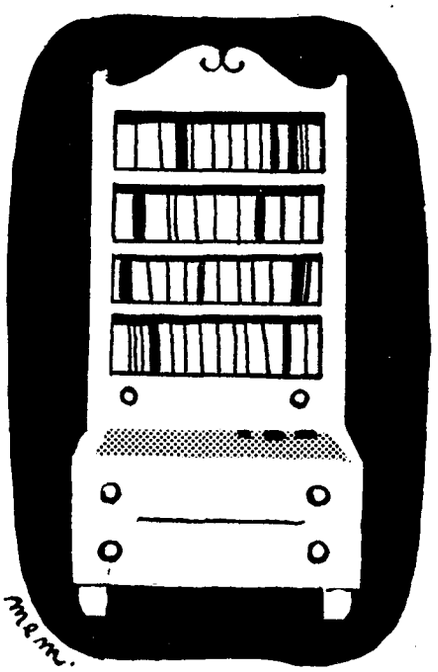
Reviewed by LUCIEN WARNER

IN HIS earlier books Prof. John B. Rhine reported experiences and experiments which convinced him that telepathy or mind reading was a fact. In accepting telepathy he seems to have let in the jungle, a jungle of miracles which leaves one open-mouthed. The attempt to prove each new wonder only unearthed others more wondrous. And, to judge from the last chapters of his latest volume, the end is not yet. In this book he carries further the story of the Duke University investigations which probe mental functions which appear to be entirely beyond, and, indeed, contrary to, principles commonly accepted both by natural scientists and by men in the street.

As usual, Rhine writes calmly, but again the evidence he presents is so startling it will be received by most people emotionally rather than rationally. Few people will decide on logical grounds whether to accept the world-shaking conclusions the Duke work is purported to have established. Readers who have themselves had experiences hardly explicable in other than psychic terms will be credulous. Most others will be skeptical, particularly if they have been exposed to considerable conservative academic training.

Telepathy was too much for most psychologists. Clairvoyance, the perception of objects entirely beyond sensory range, seemed even more difficult to stomach. But these marvels are surpassed by the two fantastic powers now presented. The first of these is "psychokinesis" or the ability of the mind through sheer will power to alter the course of physical events. The second is "precognition," or the gift of prophecy. About all this leaves for climax-capping purposes is experimental evidence of personal immortality.

The earlier evidence for clairvoyance largely consisted of records of successful card guessing, *i. e.*, of success reliably beyond chance expectation. For telepathy it was not cards, but the mental images of cards in another's mind which were guessed. The present book describes the guessing of the sequence of cards at a specific time in the future, and after shuffling. When this astonishing feat seemed possible it occurred to someone that perhaps the success was not due to the subject's ability to forecast but to the experimenter's clairvoyant ability to match the subject's guesses by shuffling "psychically." So a mechanical shuffler was used instead. When



this failed to end the good guessing the door was opened to another intruder-mind over matter. Perhaps the mechanical shuffler was being controlled by the minds of the experimenters or of the subjects. Mental control over inanimate matter for psychokinesis, was tested for the most part by requiring subjects to concentrate on mechanically thrown dice. It is said that, on the average, the desired faces of the dice came up more often than they could have by chance. *Eliminating the hypothetical psychokinetic influence from the tests of prophecy involved techniques too elaborate to discuss here.*

The evidence as it stands suggests that telepathy, clairvoyance, psychokinesis, and prophecy, if they exist at all, have much in common. First, these abilities are too feeble as at present demonstrated, to have any practical value, however nerve-shattering may be their theoretical import. The scoring is usually so slightly above chance expectation that thousands of guesses must be recorded to reach statistically reliable margins.

Second, the abilities are capricious. They wax and wane like runs of luck in gambling, except more extremely.

Third, they are normal, occurring without wide variation in all tested segments of the population, among the bright, the dull, the young, the old, the primitive, the civilized.

Fourth, they apparently operate independently of natural dimensions such as distance, material barriers, time.

Fifth, they operate unconsciously, or at any rate the subjects cannot usually say whether they are doing well or poorly.

These and other evidences of similarity among the four abilities encourage some to suspect a psychic mechanism common to them all. It will encourage others to suspect an error or fallacy common to all four investigations.

The indications that these apparent phenomena are unrelated to accepted benchmarks of knowledge suggest that they may be artifacts rather than actual. So we turn to the few objective and familiar facts which seem related to variation in these abilities.

The attitude of participants is one. Those who believe in their powers seem to score better than those who do not. Does confidence enhance psychic sensitivity? Or does belief lead to wishful experimentation? Rhine tries to rule out the latter possibility by insisting on witnesses and double-checking far more rigidly than is usual in more commonplace experimental studies. He would be quite wrong to omit such precautions.

In the attempt to transmit pictures

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a personality type seems to be related to psychic success. Drawings made by people attempting clairvoyantly to reproduce concealed pictures were ranked as to the degree to which they expressed expansive or compressed personality types. Expansive personalities scored better than did others. Yet the quantification of such ranking is less clear-cut than we might wish.

More impressive are the drug studies. Administration of caffeine raised scores whereas sodium amytal lowered them. This suggests that there was *something* to be raised or lowered. The subjects were not told what, if any, drug was given them, since the drug tablets and dummy tablets were indistinguishable (or would have been if only clairvoyance were impossible —psychic powers if accepted by scientists will revolutionize laboratory practice).

Perhaps the strongest evidence Dr. Rhine presents is some which was unanticipated in the planning of the work. It emerged long after tests were completed and only through analysis by students who had not participated in the experiments. Analysis revealed curvilinear relations of scores. These followed consistent patterns. Details cannot be given within the scope of these notes. Pending examination of the source material this reviewer sees no explanation of this portion of the evidence unless we grant chicanery and collusion among a sizable group of mature people.

"The Reach of the Mind" is readable. Except for one short section it does not suffer from undigested technical terms of concepts. Its implications are so profound that the work should be promptly confirmed or discredited. It probably will not be. Academic scientists qualified to appraise it have for the most part ruled out the possibility of these phenomena on *a priori* grounds. Few will even read the book. Among those scientists who will not automatically prejudice the case many will take no action for fear they will jeopardize their reputations by acknowledging even an interest in this unorthdox field. Probably, Dr. Rhine will be a long time winning a real hearing. Unless he can find a person who can demonstrate these phenomena consistently and under all conditions including the presence of hostile, skeptical observers, he will be a long time battering down science's conservative doors.

Lucien Warner is research director for Life, *the angel who kept "The Medium" and "The Telephone" open, and an authority on psychology, genetics, and public-opinion analysis.*

Propaganda Laggards

THE CULTURAL APPROACH. By Ruth McMurry and Muna Lee. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1947. 247 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM S. LYNCH

EVERY nation has a right to put its best foot forward, to point with reasonable pride to the success of its civilized endeavors. It has a right, too, to beam its radio against curtains of ignorance, even to use its popular songs as shields against the canards of its enemies. But there are things of warfare, weapons only, to be handled with about as much scruple as a soldier's when he tosses a hand grenade.

That nations have learned that "ideas are weapons" is more than proved in this book, in which Ruth McMurry and Muna Lee trace the increasing emphasis ten important states have been placing on the dissemination of their cultures to the world. In terms of budget and edict, techniques and statement, they show the phenomenal growth of a new way of international relations. Schools, institutes, libraries, exhibitions, concerts, radio programs—all the paraphernalia of education and communication are being directed to the general run of people. Foreign affairs are no longer matters limited to men in striped pants. Oddly enough, most of us have known this for some time. The visiting professor and the exchange student have become familiar parts of the American scene. Sometimes it has appeared as if our Congress had not heard of them, however.

Miss McMurry and Miss Lee can give us dates and figures to show how much sooner than the United States the Continental powers realized the importance of these things. They can and do show the success with which Japan used matters of thought and religion to consolidate its gains in Asia, how effectively Latin-American countries have recognized the role their scholars and artists could play in international affairs. This book, therefore, has a very special usefulness to Americans who have been slow to realize that modern technology has made communication an instant and popular necessity, that understanding is literally common and must be worked at purposively, ludicrous mistakes and initial faults to the contrary notwithstanding.

The importance of the volume is more in its implications than in its expressions. It is and pretends to be no more than a thoroughly documented account of the methods and organization whereby in the last few years a sampling of nations have been developing programs of cultural understanding as part of their foreign relations. Certain conclusions are forced on the reader, namely that a revolution is taking place in the field of diplomacy, that America has been slow to accept the new emphasis, that the bilateral aspect of current policies of intercultural relations is unsatisfactory, and that the intellectual has new public responsibilities to which he had better measure up. Until cultural relations are placed on a truly mutual and multilateral basis, it will be proper to regard the term as a cynical and sententious label for the worst kind of casuistry.

Therapeutic Art

STUDIES OF THE "FREE" ART EXPRESSION OF BEHAVIOR PROBLEM CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS AS A MEANS OF DIAGNOSIS AND THERAPY. By Margaret Naumburg. New York: Nervous and Mental Disease Monographs. Coolidge Foundation. 1947. 225 *pp.* $5.50.

Reviewed by AGNES E. BENEDICT

THIS book, a report of an investigation of art's place in therapy, opens up a line of research which, as Dr. Nolan D. C. Lewis says in the foreword, "promises much for the future." The value of the book for the layman lies partly in the clarity, simplicity, and power of the style. But the reproductions of the patients' art work—crayon drawings, paintings, and modeling—give it an added and unique value. As the reader turns from the text to graphic representations of subconscious strivings, conflicts, fears, dreams, and wishes, he gains a depth of insight into the human personality which would be impossible through words alone. He understands as never before the warpings and distortions resulting from deprivation of affection, neglect, domination, friction, and developing attitudes of fear and shame about sex. And he also realizes the healing effect of emotional release through art.

To me at least the appeal of the book is far greater than that of most volumes on personality problems which are written for popular consumption. And the reason is that Miss Naumburg never becomes the fiery crusader, but remains the clinician—dispassionate, objective, deeply sympathetic.

Parents, teachers, indeed all who deal with children, will find the book a great aid.

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HISTORY

(Continued from page 16)

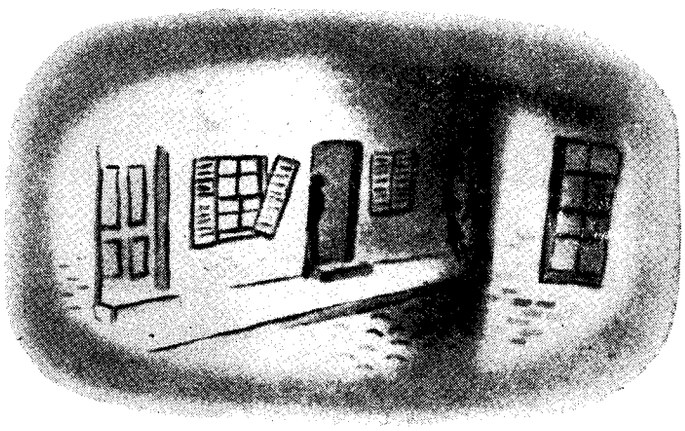
Vance Johnson) largely by the state of mind of the people on the High Plains. He quotes one of them as saying, "It's just not in our blood to play a safe game."

Why shouldn't a hard-working farmer have some adventures, make real money, and gamble a little like other folks—especially when he only makes a crop one year in four? They agree with Jesse Jones, "This country was made by men who borrowed money and took a chance." They admire men who can sometimes achieve the end without the means. They accept the natural law that a man's reach inevitably exceeds his grasp. They believe that freedom is not a negative freedom *from* something, but a positive freedom to act independently and go after what seems good. Or, if it comes to that, freedom to go to hell in one's own way.

This willingness to take a chance, combined as it often is on the High Plains with such manful energy and courage, is not a thing to be lightly belittled. When the United States is entirely peopled by bureaucrats and subsistence farmers, when all an American dares hope for is a steady job, freedom from fear and want, and that illusion which our would-be masters dub "security," this country will have lost something far more valuable than the topsoil of the Southern Plains.

Mr. Johnson writes well. His book is a faithful chronicle of the long series of follies, crimes, and misfortunes of farmers in the Dust Bowl region, the rape of the grasslands. He appears impatient at the independence of the farmers, appears to question the profit motive in agriculture, and approves the work of bureaucrats without any appreciable criticism of their methods and results. To him, apparently, a rich man who takes a chance is just a speculator, and a poor man who takes a risk just a sucker. Mr. Johnson also takes a dim view of the future of this region, though admitting that at the time he wrote it was blossoming like the rose. He has the philosophy of Joseph in Egypt and, like Joseph's, his attitude is not a winning one.

He discusses thoroughly the various plans and methods that have been employed to rehabilitate the Dust Bowl and accurately estimates their success and failure. He admits that progress has been made, but in his last chapter, entitled "Here We Go Again," he anticipates another cycle of land speculation, drouth, bankruptcy, and abandonment.



"It was almost dark in Barndon Street, Soho, when the door of Number Five began to open, very very slowly . . ."

Thus begins the most unusual crime story in many years—a novel which the publishers—and the critics—think is destined to become a classic.

HOWARD HAYCRAFT in *The Saturday Review of Literature:*
"This powerful, original, often disturbing first novel about an English murder trial will appeal alike to discriminating devotees of the whodunit (although this is no pattern puzzle) and to those readers who place human values above plot manipulation in their rare excursions into crime fiction."

GRAHAM GREENE:
"The best crime story I have read since *Malice Aforethought*."

JOHN BETJEMAN in *The London Daily Herald:*
"It is so much better than the usual machine-made detective story that to compare it with one is like contrasting two ounces of synthetic margarine with a great, golden pound slab of farmhouse butter."

WILLIAM McGIVERN in *The Philadelphia Sunday Bulletin:*
". . . will have even the coolest reader looking cautiously over his shoulder on dark nights."

AND . . . just to make it unanimous . . . THE NEW YORKER calls it "a first-rate job," ISAAC ANDERSON of *The New York Times* think it's "a masterpiece" and WILL CUPPY of *The New York Herald Tribune* says it's "a crime tale you won't forget."

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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Seeing Things

THE PATIENT'S DILEMMA

HAD I not, as a resident of New York, been forced to depend upon doctors this past summer, the "message" (for message it has) of Mr. Rodgers's and Mr. Hammerstein's "Allegro"* would have left me less alarmed.

I might have spent the evening relishing the beauty and quickening emphasis of Jo Mielziner's projected settings. I might have been able to concentrate more completely on the energy and imagination of Agnes de Mille's choreography and direction. I might have been freer to admire Richard Rodgers's musicianly though unhummable score. I might have been less hampered in following the twists and turnings of Oscar Hammerstein's book; an "Everyman" (or rather an "Everydoctor") sort of libretto which is often quite moving in a pedestrian, greeting-card kind of way when dealing with talcumed and collegiate days. Nothing might have interrupted my respect for an effort which, as an effort, was departing from traditional musical comedy forms in ways both brave and costly.

But early in the evening, as an ex-invalid, I became conscious, painfully conscious, of what "Allegro" was saying. It was then that a certain selfish fear froze my apprehensive heart. Thereafter I found I could keep my mind less and less on how "Allegro" was saying it.

As a cured Manhattanite who may need to be cured again, I kept dreading what would happen should one of the actors be compelled to step forward to the footlights and ask, "Is there a doctor in the house?" This much I am certain of. Had there been one, he would have been either a fool or a moral hero to admit it. Because I gather (and here's the message of "Allegro") that the citizens not only of Chicago but of New York, Boston, and all other large cities visited or unvisited by John Gunther, have absolutely no right to either medication or surgery.

Let a doctor heed the siren's call of a big city; let him pack his suitcases and carry his little black bag to a settlement where millions, not a paltry few thousand, are potential patients; let his office be in a brick apartment building on a paved thoroughfare rather than in a frame house on a shady dirt road; let him call on his patients in a shiny motor car instead of in a one-hoss shay or a Model-T Ford; let him take care of the rich no less than the poor; let him be wicked enough to work in a large hospital rather than in a small one; let him drop into a club instead of squatting near a cracker-barrel; let him buy his wife not gingham but satin, and prescribe penicillin not calomel, and—presto—then and therefore (according to Mr. Hammerstein) he has sold his soul, betrayed Aesculapius, and made a mockery of his Hippocratic oath.

'Twas ever thus. I mean that two city dwellers as prosperous and happy as Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Hammerstein should in this manner hymn the virtues of a small town, without ever thinking of moving there. Being mortals no less than a musician and a playwright, they must occasionally suffer from those ailments which appear to be as common in the city as in the country. What they do when fever removes the city pallor from their cheeks or pain oppresses the unreachable stretches of their interiors, or when surgeons must have at them, I can only guess. No doubt, what you or I or any others miscreant enough to live in the larger municipalities do under such circumstances. That is, telephone the nearest city-fed medico and writhe in impatient agony until he arrives.

This, however, is not the course of action which, if loyal to "Allegro," Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Hammerstein, or any of us city slickers should pursue. No. No. And no again. Indeed not! We should fall into our motors, whistle weakly for a cab, be carried to an ambulance, or totter through the traffic to the nearest station, and head for a village—any village, anywhere, and no matter how far away—so long as by charter and by custom it is beyond dispute a village and neither a city nor a town.

Such is the program, impractical and dangerous if nothing more, to which Mr. Hammerstein is apparently committed, although, as I happen to know, he is a friend, perhaps even a patient, of the city surgeon (and a fine one) who is familiar with my own terrain. At least "Allegro" would have us believe that our only medical hope lies in a village setting. There only is virtue. There only is goodness. There only are the cures that cure. There only does the man who hangs out his shingle retain his soul and permit us to retain our lives.

No one can deny there is virtue in villages. It does seem fair, if unnecessary, however, to remind Mr. Hammerstein that villages have no monopoly upon it. As Mr. Hammerstein and Mr. Rodgers must know, both of them being New York born, virtue also finds its way into cities. Moreover, in cities virtue leads a life scarcely more perilous than in the tank-towns. This is as true among those who follow the medical profession as it is of those who follow any of the world's younger professions.

INTEGRITY is not a matter of geography. Sir William Osler and Hugh Young came through the municipal pressures of Baltimore unscathed. Boston did no damage to Harvey Cushing. He remained as great there, in spite of the city's size, as he would have been at a whistle stop on a branch line of the Peoria & Eastern. And, to choose again at random from countless illustrations which could be advanced with enthusiasm by G. P.'s (meaning "Grateful Patients") in present-day Manhattan, James Alexander Miller, Frank Adair, and Henry Cave continue to be as brilliant, generous, and dedicated, in spite of practising in New York, as they would have been had they elected to remain in their respective Bethlehems, which were Roselle, N. J., Beverly, O., and Paducah, Ky.

Both metropolises and the grass-roots offer their counterbalancing dangers and opportunities to doctors, precisely as they do to everyone else. The perils of "The Citadel" are offset by the sorrows known to Chekhov's

---

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small-town physician in "The Three Sisters" who had not kept pace with the advances made in his profession, and was frank to admit he had forgotten what he had once learned. The question in each case is not how large or small is the place. It is how big is the man. That cities produce "society" doctors, whether on Park Avenue or Harley Street, is unarguable. But that doctors become "society" doctors merely by moving into places large enough to have produced a "society" is too mush-brained a notion to require demolition.

Mr. Hammerstein is as aware of this as anyone else. Even in "Allegro" his worship of villages as the true and only locations of the Grail is limited to medicine. The nastiest character in his libretto (and she is a female calculated to win blue ribbons at any dog show) is as much the product of a rural, though perhaps not free, delivery as the hero himself. I have in mind the young doctor's boyhood sweetheart who becomes his wife. Palpably, her soul has not been purified by the mere act of corresponding with Sears-Roebuck. It is she who provokes the heart attack which carries off her fiancé's mother. It is she who forces her husband to leave their hometown and his father's practice for Chicago, where people actually drink cocktails. It is she, after being unfaithful to him there in a big way, who pretends to be horrified when her young doctor-husband decides to regain his lost decencies by returning to the sweet, pure air of his hometown.

I dwell on the medical aspects of "Allegro's" thesis not only because, if logically considered, they lead to nonsensical conclusions, but because they are symptomatic of what is difficult to swallow in the libretto's sentimentality. I do not for an instant think Mr. Hammerstein really believes that all city doctors are bad, all country doctors good, solely because the first happen to be urban, the second rural. He merely toys with this idea, as Marie Antoinette played at being a dairymaid and with a result that is no more convincing. What is more, he toys with it, knowing that most

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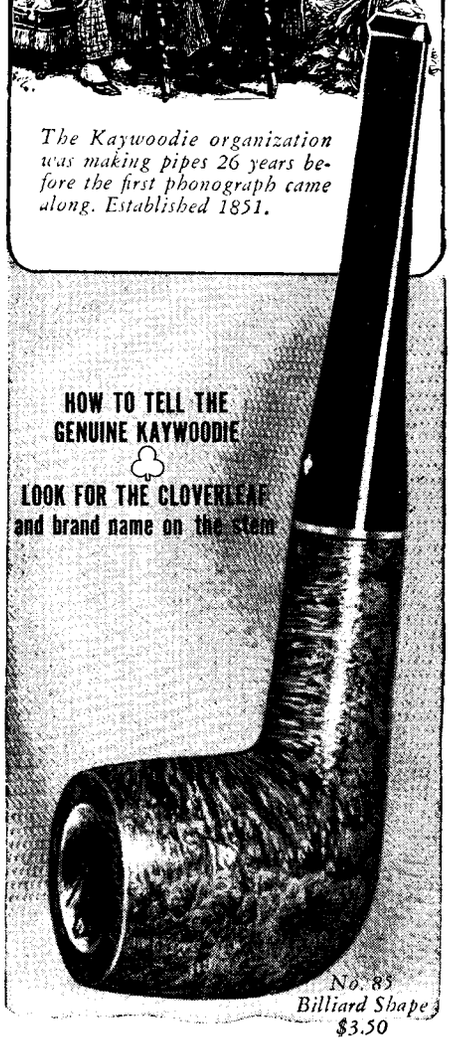

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HAROLD LAMB, famed as the author of "The Crusades" and the motion picture "The Plainsman," puts his knowledge of the Orient to good use in his new book "Garden to the Eastward." He smokes a Kaywoodie.

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members of his audience, reared in or out of large cities, are suckers for this very myth.

Goethe wrote of the pine-tree's melancholy love for the palm. All people tend to idealize what they neither are nor have. The city slicker's (*vide* Mr. Hammerstein's) readiness to think that goodness is a corn-fed fruit is one of the most touching sentimentalities to which sophisticates are heir. It is almost as poignant as the hick's conviction that city dwellers are sophisticated. One of the troubles with "Allegro," so beautiful and adventurous in its staging, is that it is hard for anyone listening to what the book is saying to get far enough away from the lack of logic of its theme to enjoy the full enchantment of the production's view.

"Allegro" is the stylized biography of a small-town doctor's son named Joseph Taylor. It starts off by dealing with his birth and childhood as if Joseph Taylor were the universal man. This is an idea easy to accept, since doctors, after all, are as human as their patients. If we prick them, young or old, they bleed as surely as we do when, in their active adult days, they prick us.

As babies, eminent pediatricians no less than the most celebrated surgeons have worn diapers and necessitated their change. In their cribs they have uttered googoos (even as you and I) which have been translated by their proud parents into epigrams. As boys, they have made hideous noises, played baseball, and been warned by the deaths of their grandparents that their parents must die, too. Like everyone else, when they first go off to college doctors are apt to be lonely. Upon graduation they have even been known to marry, since their having studied physiology has not exempted them from its urgings. Their wives have also been rumored to quarrel with their mothers-in-law. All these are experiences safely, indeed ines-

Inside Anyville

(With apologies to Mr. Gunther)

By Irwin Edman

THE POPULATION here is growing,
The local river keeps on flowing,
The chairman of the Farmer's Bank
Is said to be a Free Trade Crank.
The chief tycoon grew rich on glue,
The newspapers in town are two,
One is a little left, one right,
Though which is which no one knows quite.
In '40 both preached Intervention;
There's one street neither one will mention.

A liberal Governor is known here
For all the graft he won't condone here;
The town has no religious issues,
The hotel towels are paper tissues,
The natural setting here is fine,
Hills are the region's special line,
And there are rivers, too, and bays,
And three times yearly local plays.

People here stay sane and healthy,
The country club includes the wealthy,
All did well in and by the war,
Not least the large department store.

Everybody fears inflation;
There is no local radio station,
But there's a dinerette whose stews,
They say, made Duncan Hines enthuse.

The American Legion here is strong,
The C.I.O. it gets along;
Local gossip says that Jones
Outnumber Smiths and also Cohns.
Negroes are getting better breaks,
Phil's restaurant serves two-inch steaks.
The cost of living rises steeply;
People dislike the sales tax deeply.

This is the Inside Stuff, or is it
Just notes made on a two-day visit.

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capably, within the "Everyman" or "Everydoctor" formula.

Moreover, when "Allegro" is recounting such experiences and using incidents in the life of Skeezicks to fashion an American "Jedermann," it has the courage of its sentimentality. Even then, however, its libretto stands poised on the brink of a dangerous precipice.

From a writer's point of view the tender innocences of childhood are hazardous. The rattle an infant carries charmingly can be a self-destroying bomb to the author who would handle it. Few things are more unbearable than other people's baby books. Yet these cradleside simplicities are the stuffs with which Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Hammerstein have ventured to deal in the first half of "Allegro." We may, in fact we must, respect what they and their fellow-workers have achieved again and again in theatrical terms. But that they moisten our eyes does not mean they have conquered our minds. Often we weep most readily at what intellectually we most deplore.

If "Allegro" is illogical in implying that at our moments of illness we must rush back to Grover's Corners if we would be cured by doctors who are not charlatans, it is no less illogical in developing its own general theme. At the very instant that its young doctor's fiancée kills his mother by causing her to have a heart attack, the allegory flies out the window. The generality becomes the particular; the universal experience a specific plot. I do not mean to say that some doctors' wives do not feel like killing their mothers-in-law. I merely mean that most of them show greater restraint and are willing to depend upon the mercies of the calendar.

All this may seem like poor thanks for an evening truly distinguished in its staging, and at least original in the intention of its writing. The fault is not ours if we bring uncommon expectations to any work upon which Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Hammerstein have collaborated. After all, their "Oklahoma!" is one of the glories of the modern stage. Their "Carousel" also had its incontestable magic.

As sheer craftsmanship, "Allegro" is as notable as its forerunners. What it lacks, and lacks grievously, is a book possessed of their inspiration. My own difficulty in its presence was the by-product of my respect for both of its authors. They could not keep me from listening to what "Allegro" was saying. This, I must confess, filled me with the natural dismay of a city man who has reached that time of life when his circle of intimates includes more and more and more doctors.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

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Journalism.

Early this year the Commission on Freedom of the Press published its report, "A Free and Responsible Press" (reviewed in SRL *Apr. 5). The report served to open even wider the gate of controversy over the press. Individual members of the Commission, for example, have published their own studies, i.e.: Professor Hocking's "Freedom of the Press: A Framework of Principle" (reviewed in* SRL *Oct. 4), and Professor Chafee's recent "Government and Mass Communications." Pertinent books soon to appear are "The American Press and the San Francisco Conference," by Milton Stewart, and "Your Newspaper," by 9 Nieman Fellows. . . . In the UN's Commission on Human Rights advocates of a free press are now locked in world combat with the supporters of a controlled press. The old debate over the purpose and progress of American journalism takes on, therefore, fresh urgency.*

Swinging at a Feather Bed

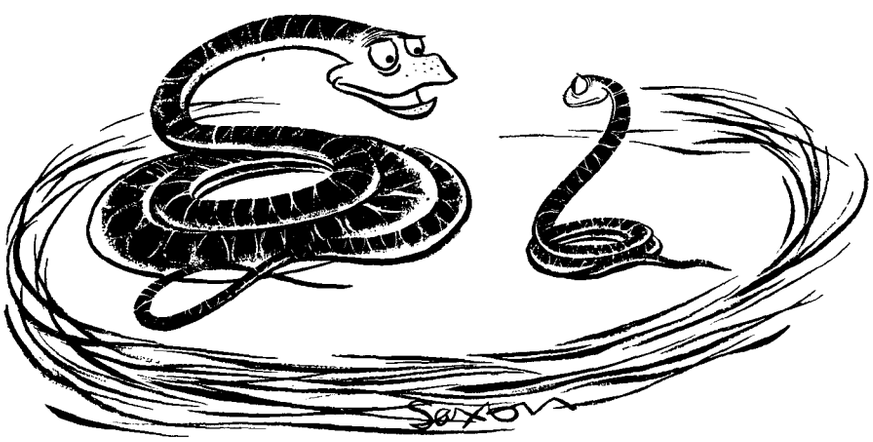
THE WAYWARD PRESSMAN. By A. J. Liebling. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 284 *pp.* $2.95.

Reviewed by DON HOLLENBECK

HOW HARD, and how often do you have to hit a feather bed before it hollers uncle? Into how many empty wells must you lower a bucket, seeking truth? These rhetorical questions come to mind in considering the increasing number of critical comments on the American press, because as anyone who has taken on the job of such criticism knows to his anguish, the effort is pretty much like fighting a feather bed, or like hunting water in an empty well. You don't seem to get many tangible results, but, somehow, you've got to keep trying.

A. J. Liebling, known to copy desks and city-room staffs as Joe, is the latest to square off in the ring with that puzzling and tricky fighter, Journalism, who can take the stiffest and cleverest kind of punches, and come back for more. Mr. Liebling's book, "The Wayward Pressman," is built around a collection of his articles written for *The New Yorker*. The collection includes such well-remembered pieces as the one about the Associated Press's monumental scoop on the German surrender, and the subsequent handing of its correspondent Edward Kennedy to the wolves; the story of how the *Sun* stands still; the late Fiorello La Guardia as a columnist, and others as penetrating and readable.

But something has been added: thirty thousand words of Mr. Liebling's own history as a newspaperman, lessons and impressions since the early Twenties. As a student at the Pulitzer School of Journalism at Columbia, he began hanging around with the reporters at Police Headquarters to get items for his classroom work, and he has never looked back. One thing a good newspaperman never does seem to learn is to get out of the thwarting, confusing, and sometimes venal business. A *good* newspaperman, I said. He may try a new well here and there, as Mr. Liebling has turned to magazine reporting, but if he's worth



"Don't say 'curl,' say 'coil'."

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his salt, he stays with it. He still looks for something to turn up in one of those wells one day.

Twenty years ago, Mr. Liebling was doing an emergency hitch as a copy-reader on the Providence, R. I., *Evening Bulletin*. Help was short, and work was piled high. On one particularly tough day, one of the copy-readers, of just so-so ability, was late. When he finally arrived, a desk man named Doherty asked him without rancor where the hell he'd been. The tardy one said he'd been up at Brown University, giving a lecture to an English class—telling them all about newspaper work. To which Mr. Doherty made the deathless riposte: "Who told you?"

Nobody has had to tell Joe Liebling much about newspaper work. During the twenty-five years he has been in the business he has made up his own mind, collected a number of very positive ideas about the shortcomings of American journalism, and these he communicates with vigor and clarity to the reader of "The Wayward Pressman." The principal thing wrong with the American press, he believes, is "the diminishing number of newspapers, and their concentration in the hands of a group of wealthy individuals who share the same point of view." Any hope? Perhaps, he thinks, "when newspapering is made a profession instead of a form of employment. States might set up newspaper commissions, like racing commissions, which would set down writers for lying, and rule off habitual offenders." Well, a man can dream, can't he?

Those who have read and admired Mr. Liebling's *New Yorker* pieces will find they wear well; gathered together in a collection, they add up to make a depressing and amusing catalogue of the frailties of the American press. And it is in those *New Yorker* articles that the real point of press criticism lies. The learned and sober-sided gentlemen of academic and public life may sermonize and preach all they please about what is the matter with the American press. They are perfectly right in what they say, of course, but the trouble is nobody reads them. Precious few readers of the daily papers have made their way through the Hutchins committee's report on "A Free and Responsible Press." Morris Ernst wrote an extremely lucid and valuable book on the press, called "The First Freedom." He tells me it sold about fourteen thousand copies, which isn't exactly a figure of best-seller proportions, and it probably included very few of the two and a half million people who read the *Daily News* every day.

Most critics of the press are so concerned with the magnitude of their

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A tribute for a job well done.

For these are not just still and idle strands
That stretch across a country vast and wide
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Of life's friendly words
And messages of high import
To people everywhere.

Not spectacular, your usual day,
Nor in the headlines
Except they be of fire, or storm, or flood.
Then a grateful nation
Knows the full measure of your skill and worth.
And the fine spirit of service
Which puts truth and purpose in this honored creed—
"The message must go through."

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

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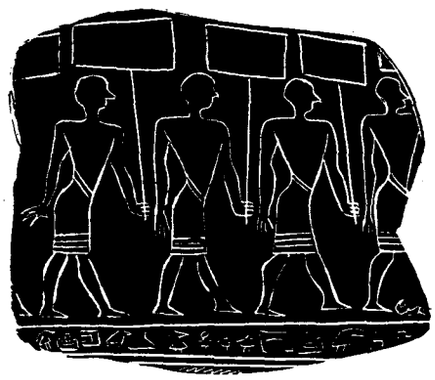
jobs, so perplexed with their attempts to land a telling punch on the feather bed that they get over-serious. It's when you get a collection of case-histories such as this that the press begins to look comical in a pompous way. As Mr. Liebling himself saw *The New York Times*, after it had printed an especially lurid advertisement, written by a press agent: "It tried to straighten its hair and look as if nothing had happened, but it has never been quite the same spinsterish newspaper since. It seems to have lipstick all over its face." And in a letter to Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of the *Times*, concerning the advertisement, Mr. Liebling made the point perfectly when he wrote, "There are subjects on which it is more important to be amusing than sympathetic. By being amusing, you get read by the people you want to reach. By being sympathetic, you get to be a lovable old city-room character and eventually a teacher in a school of journalism."

Joe Liebling will probably never become a teacher in a school of journalism, although if he does, I want to be among the first to enroll for the full course. But he is, and will be, among the most competent and amusing critics of the American press;



his pointed and caustic comments will set a lot of people to thinking about the daily press, that ink-stained old party they've been seeing around every day and taking pretty much for granted, shortcomings and all. The old party is quick to proclaim his virtues to the world, but of his shortcomings he does not speak, so it is necessary now and then that he be reminded of them.

We who are about to take another swing at the feather bed salute Joe Liebling.

Don Hollenbeck is on the staff of the Columbia Broadcasting System in New York, for which he conducts a weekly radio column on the press.

He Likes People

MAIN STREET BEAT. By Henry W. Clune. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1947. 269 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by VINCENT S. JONES

HENRY W. CLUNE is one newspaperman who really got around to trying his hand at writing the Great American Novel. Two of his efforts got into print. Now his publishers have persuaded him to turn out something more important — a book about the very real people he knows whose deeds and misdeeds are so much richer than most fiction.

People are Henry Clune's first, last, and only interest as a reporter and writer. He sees everything in terms of people. That's why his daily column, "Seen and Heard," in the Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle*, is a Western New York institution. "Main Street Beat" is a personal history, but Clune writes about himself chiefly in terms of the people he has met. And he really did run into "interesting people" in the course of thirty years of reporting.

He likes them.

I like policemen and politicians, bankers and horse players, grande dames from the Avenue, pitchmen

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—AMY LOVEMAN, *Saturday Review*

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on street corners, and the tinseled little ladies from the cheaper cabarets [he says]. I like industrialists, cab drivers, college profs, the boys in the back alley saloons and the debutantes in the Country Club. Even stuffed shirts fail to bore me; for I am always curious to know what fears or inhibitions cause them to pad themselves with fustian and eager to ascertain if behind their false façades they are not very much like the rest of us. Mostly, I have found that they are.

It is this warm curiosity about his fellow man that has kept Clune contented to amble up and down his beloved Main Street, writing his little pieces. By staying right at home (except for one or two short-lived efforts to "escape"), he has acquired a considerable (if parochial) fame, and a fair share of the true happiness which has eluded so many of his apparently more successful fellow-townsmen. Clune takes people as they are. He reports them, without worrying about whether they are worth while.

Clune's newspapering began at the tag end of what some people like to call the Golden Age of Journalism. There were real giants then, like the sports editor who handed up a "decision" on a fight although he was too drunk to see a single blow.

While these fabulous characters make captivating reading, Clune has no regrets about the days of the sixty-four-hour week, when apprentice reporters worked literally for nothing in rat-infested city rooms for the hard-fisted managers of absentee owners. From this period only two figures are recalled with respect and affection: Louis M. Antisdale, editor-publisher of the now defunct Rochester *Herald*, who stuck by his men, and Morris Adams, Clune's idea of a peerless city editor.

Despite a rather old-fashioned elegance, which may be a heritage from those days, Clune remains at heart a good reporter and a natural storyteller. He can be blunt and unsparing and surprisingly frank in what he writes about his home town and its people. There's a lesson here for every ambitious young writer. You don't have to go to San Francisco or New Orleans to find "colorful" characters. They are right at home—even in such outwardly placid and conservative cities as Rochester.

Vincent S. Jones is executive editor of the Utica (*N. Y.*) Observer-Dispatch *and* Utica Daily Press.

Exile

By Ida B. Bruno

NOVEMBER scuffles down the street,
frost decorates the window pane
with woodland patterns so complete
I seem to walk the woods again.

Here the fern and there the fennel,
silver glaze on ditch and bole,
hide the foxes in their kennel,
shield the rabbits in their hole.

Mirage is cancelled by full day,
illusion melted by the sun,
where uneven footpaths lay
harsh geometric shadows run.

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September 30, 1947

Greenberg, Publisher
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New York 22, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

Thank you very much for sending me the book by Th. Th. Heine "I WAIT FOR MIRACLES". I read the novel of the great cartoonist with the deepest interest, and congratulate you on its publication.

This fantastic and satirical variation of the autobiography, - a form which had to be invented and could only have been invented by an artist as brilliant as Heine, - is extremely attractive, and it is treated with so much lightness and assuredness that it offers the same enjoyment as his graphic masterpieces.

Since I belonged for several years to the editorial staff of the paper which is described in the novel under the name of "The Meteor", the book was rich with memories for me. I knew Heine well at that time, and, young as I was, felt distinctly that his mind stood out among the gay crowd of artists and merry-makers of Munich, a crowd which did not pass any character test and was ready to deliver Heine to the Nazis as a seducer of innocence. What saved him was one of those "Miracles" for which he gives his thanks in this book.

Very truly yours
Thomas Mann

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BOOKED for TRAVEL

SOUTH AMERICA . . . AY! AY! AY!

ONE OF the hit songs from the current Broadway musical show "Call Me Mister" invites South America to take back some of its customs which have been adopted in the U. S., namely the rumba, conga, samba, and other efforts at slithery locomotion. When the song was sung at a New York night club recently, one Latin took audible exception to the lyrics, a bit of native patriotism that netted him a bump on the head and front-page notices.

Actually no American ever looks at South America with anything but a fleeting thought of beauty and romance, lest the glance be in the direction of the pestilencia of Perón. But South Americans, unlike the tourist-wise French, or the promotionally-minded Hawaiians, have always had a complex about advertising the charm of their natives, their colorful way of life, their ruins, and their history. During the war they scurried to build shiny new buildings, big hotels, and a network of fine roads. Tourist attractions are being dusted off, old hotels shined up, a modern front plastered on the ancient house.

Ship service has been off to a slow start the world over, but the Grace Line already has weekly casual cruises to Colombia and Venezuela via new air-conditioned cargo-passenger ships, and weekly service from New York through the Canal and down to Chile.

A favorite sidelight on the twelve-day luxury cruises of the *Santa Rosa* and the *Santa Paula*, also in weekly service, is the optional overland trip from La Guaira to Porto Cabello stopping overnight at Caracas. En route passengers can visit orchid farms, see some of the 700 varieties grown in Venezuela, buy three for $2, ship nine to the States for about $12. Touring cars, which carry speedometers in kilometers, traverse the tortuous mountain roads, which are decorated with scenery, goats, and incongruous signs proclaiming the perfection of American-make motor cars. Maracay, which was the favorite of the now defunct dictator Gomez, is likewise a favorite of the tourists who come to see the Hotel Jardin, where he accommodated friends with elaborate banquets served on gold dishes, lubricated them with continuous champagne, and kept the party gay with imported vaudeville.

Cartagena, Colombia, is one of the three treasure ports where the conquistadores loaded their Spanish galleons with loot from South America and Mexico. The protective walls are wide enough in some places to be used as a road. Cartagena also boasts the magnificent Hotel Caribe fronting the ocean with a lagoon behind.

Ecuador is the home of Panama hats, which lost their proper identity during the California gold rush when prospectors bought them at the Isthmus while waiting for boats up the Pacific. Ships put in at Puna in Ecuador, and passengers go by yacht to Guayaquil, where the buses have radios which invite extra native patronage, the pineapples are the drippiest in South America, and the new hotel is called the Metropolitano.

Lima, Peru, is the City of Kings and was built by Pizzaro on the loot he hijacked from the Incas. It is a cosmopolitan city, and just outside its limits are the mountains of the coastal desert which make fine sand-skiing. Looking out to sea one sees the Guano Cliffs, famous depository for the Guano birds whose droppings form the basis of a huge fertilizer industry.

The narrow ribbon of Chile which stretches 3,000 miles from the tropics to the Antarctic and rarely runs wider than 100 miles is a sportsman's paradise without equal on the continent. In its southern lake region are some of the finest ski resorts in the world. Its waters have given up rainbow trout that weigh twenty-seven pounds, and one record broadbill swordfish that rang the bell at 860 lbs. Although many Latins have traveled all the way to Baden-Baden, Chile has excellent spas.

By sea South America's east coast is serviced by Moore-McCormack, which is just getting in the post-war swim. Pan American Airways has developed a well-integrated service, all the way to Buenos Aires, which is now two days and $526 out of New York via Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Belem, and Rio. Flying down to Rio, which not so long ago was nothing more than a futuristic production number in a Hollywood musical, is now literally an everyday occurrence. Leave New York at 11:30 p.m., arrive San Juan 9:30 the next morning. Stop for an hour, then over the jungle to Belem and into Rio the following morning. In Brazil you will find Sugar Loaf mountain, modern hotels, mosaic sidewalks, the $10,000,000 resort of Quitandinha, and as you may have heard, an awful lot of coffee.

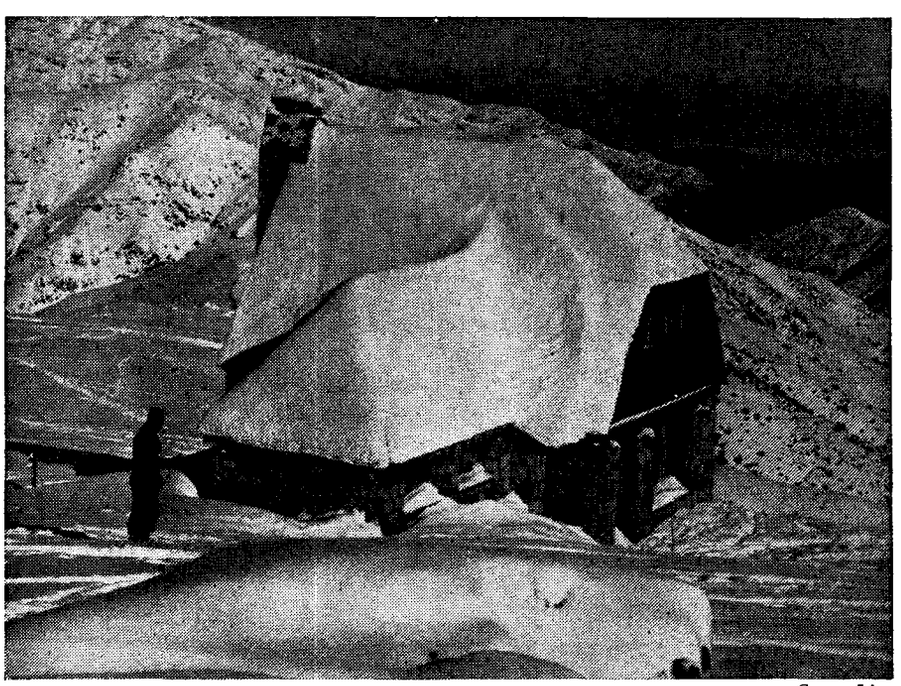
HORACE SUTTON.

"Puchero" Tidbits

THE RIVER PLATE REPUBLICS. By Betty de Sherbinin. New York: Coward-McCann. 1947. 276 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by SPRUILLE BRADEN

THIS BOOK can be compared appropriately with the "puchero" (Argentina's equivalent of our own New England boiled dinner), which it describes. Stews—edible or literary—can be very succulent, indeed, and it is only fair to say that in the one presented by this young author



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there can be found some tasty tidbits. Unfortunately, however, they are too few in number and the nourishment as a whole is poorly prepared, unrewarding, and ill-assorted.

At the beginning of Chapter I, one is elated to discover that Betty de Sherbinin has lived and gone to school in Argentina. At least, one thinks, she will not be one of those glib scribblers who are prone "to expert" on a great and complex nation after only a week or so in the country, mostly spent in the capital city. Here, one hopes, is a writer who knows not only the language and customs but who has that far more essential talent —the "feel of and for the people."

It is disappointing, therefore, to find in this book the most elementary errors and a number of omissions. As a result, her book is superficial and often misleading. Also it is frequently repetitious and overly ambitious in trying to describe within a single volume three distinct republics with all their social, economic, and political variations and differences of character. Incidentally, she adds insult to injury by devoting only about sixteen per cent of the work to Paraguay and Uruguay. At times the book seems about to turn into a tourist's guide. But even in this aspect it is badly organized and lacks the details desired by an uninformed traveler. However, the reader every so often is encouraged to continue his perusal because Miss Sherbinin recounts some anecdote or gives some fact of genuine interest.

If the author in her next effort will plan more carefully and concentrate on the type of anecdote and incidents at which she is so good, she should, by reason of her years in Argentina, produce a savory product.

Spruille Braden, former U. S. Ambassador to Colombia, Cuba, and Argentina, resigned in June as Assistant Secretary of State for American Republics Affairs.

Behind the Beyond

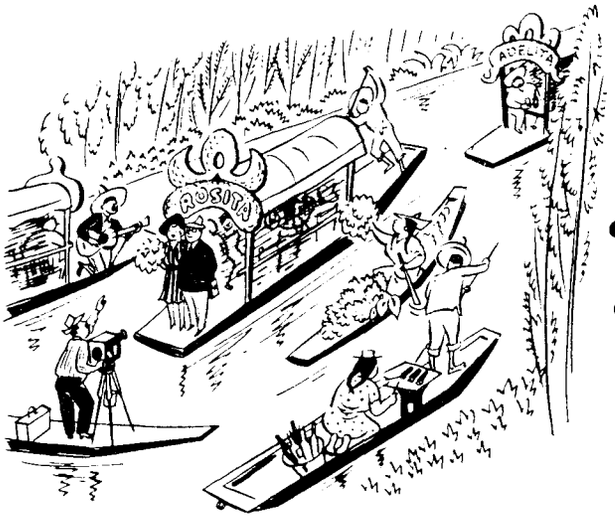
EAST OF THE ANDES AND WEST OF NOWHERE. By Nancy Bell Bates. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 237 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM F. HORSEY

HERE is a vivid picture of daily life "at the back of beyond," where the eastbound streams from the Andes flow across the great Colombian "llanos" or plains to create the mighty Orinoco River. Woven into the bright glimpses of tropic lands is the saga of men, monkeys, and mosquitoes which tells of Rockefeller Foundation's long fight in the South American jungles against yellow fever and other scourges of man. Nancy Bell Bates also introduces a vast amount of scientific information without the reader becoming aware, until he lays the book down.

This is no hasty garbled product of some airway traveler who never got farther east than the bar in the Hotel New Granada at Bogotá. It is a live and pulsating observation of native Colombian life by a warm-hearted woman. To those who know Latin America, there is much written by Mrs. Bates which is equally true elsewhere in other countries south of the Rio Grande. Old-timers will be nostalgic and arm-chair travelers will find a gay, absorbing book on a region scarcely known in Latin America, let alone in the U.S.A.

Throughout, the Bates treatment is vigorous. Her insets of wild-life are



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fascinating and become uncannily real. A sketch map would have been helpful in following her journeys in this little-known corner of the earth for even the ancient town of Villavivencio does not appear on the map unless the authoress decided to change the name of the town she lived in to analyze the better its worthy citizens. With her, we peep into their kitchens and daily lives, but she treats them all with kindness.

William F. Horsey is United Press bureau head in Santiago, Chile.

Peruvian Baedeker

LAND OF THE ANDES. By T. R. Ybarra. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc. 1947. 262 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by LUIS LEON

THIS is one of the very few books written by a North American about South America that — thank God—does not deal with internal politics, the Indian problem, or the scarcity of schools. Mr. Ybarra has written a baedeker of Peru and Bolivia that takes the travel book skeleton of facts and history and clothes them with romance, anecdote, fable, and tradition.

The author obviously knows the countries of which he writes, and he approaches them with sympathy and understanding. If he points out, for example, the nuisance of lottery vendors, which is a nuisance to the Peruvians, too, he also notes with kindness the interested verbosity of the Lima taxi driver who appointed himself Mr. Ybarra's compulsory "cicerone."

"Land of the Andes" has another special virtue for South Americans whose continent has so much to offer the American tourist who heretofore has looked to Europe. It has an allure, which Mr. Ybarra has faithfully reported, composed of the old ways combined with the comforts of civilization North Americans like to enjoy even when away from home. The farther south the North American goes, the more at home he feels in this respect.

The tourists who follow Mr. Ybarra's journeyings will find that he has pictured correctly the narrow streets, the dimly lighted interiors of the old churches at the hour of Angelus, the thrill of crossing the Andes on the highest railway in the world.

Luis Leon is editor of El Comercio *and Associated Press bureau chief in Lima, Peru.*

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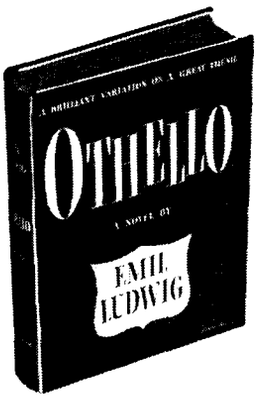

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extent of the tragedy known. What was elemental, the minute and unimportant alteration in the crust of the earth, becomes personal and universal. The drama that springs from Ramuz's theme does not deal with the conflict of characters or thought, or with the difference between one man or another. Even the religious motive which another writer might have used to enhance the emotional effect is subordinated to the primitive and timeless qualities of man, his fear, courage, love, and endurance. When the man who had been buried for over four months staggers back home, he is accepted at first, not with welcoming shouts and with love, but as something inhuman and fearsome. When his mind clears, one obsession remains, that his companion is still alive. Before dawn he climbs back to the valley and for days hovers over the site of the buried hut, picking fruitlessly at the vast slabs of rock. He is left alone as if his task was forced upon him by some supernatural agency. At the end his pregnant wife climbs up to him and follows him when he flees from her.

They are lost to the sight of watching friends and finally are seen united on a distant hillside.

> High up on the very top of the mountain wall, the glacier streamed with light like a comb of honey. But around the two that were coming—and they were a real man and a real woman—all the valley they were leaving had passed into night and into silence,, had become the home of sadness and death forever.

Frost

By Christine Turner Curtis

IN THE pond swam the mountain,
the moon swam too,
skimming an aqueous
ironstone blue.

Frost bit the sugar maples,
pinched the fern stalks,
laid leaf medallions
on the flagged walks.

A brook-water freshened
the horn-blue air;
bog odors flavored
that hollow where

Dorset village nested
breathing a cone
of leaf aromatics
and hill ozone.

Doomed Vessel

UNSEEN HARBOR. By Frank Laskier. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1947. 319 pp. $3.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

MR. LASKIER'S book is a new variation of the doom-ship theme, half literature and half melodrama; or maybe it is only that melodrama cannot be avoided when an attractive girl stowaway is added to the discordant mixture of temperaments aboard a long-voyage freighter. There is no central character unless it be Mulligan, the outcast, the thoroughly bad sailor, who has taken the steps going down as the result of an unfortunate love affair. His portrait is drawn with much understanding, and the supporting detail is convincing to a certain degree; but it is a little difficult to believe in the adequacy of either his own motivation or in that of the other sailors who hate and despise him. Sailors may lose their lives for love, but the evidence that this one has done so will strike most readers as insufficient, and there is very little in the character as given to prepare for the final act of passion.

It is much the same with the other people. The nautical detail is good and they are all well drawn—up to a point. They talk, move, and act like people, the book tears along toward its climax at a great pace, and

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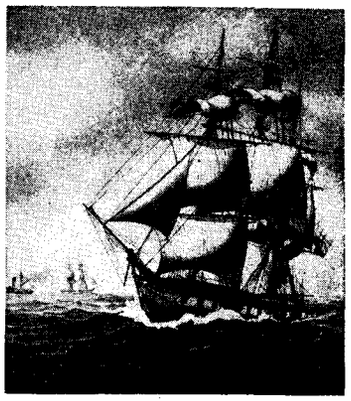

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everything is rosy until the moment when the motivation for a key action is introduced. Here Mr. Laskier's ingenuity does not seem quite equal to the task of providing a plausible reason for what he wants to happen, so the action is simply thrown at the reader without explanation. This is particularly true of the ship's end; it does not grow inevitably out of the story and is almost pure coincidence.

Yet Mr. Laskier's skill in the handling of incident, his narrative drive, and his ability to characterize through action are such that most readers will be carried right past the soft spots in the road without noticing anything more than a slight bump. For a first novel it is an extremely good performance, well worth reading, and leaving one with an interesting bit of speculation—whether the author will follow the indicated melodramatic line or tighten up his technique and turn out to be a serious novelist.

Darkest France

THREE SHORT NOVELS. By Vercors. Translated by Eric Sutton and Haakon M. Chevalier. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 195 *pp.* $2.

A FINE OF 200 FRANCS. By Elsa Triolet. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1947. 313 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

HERE are six stories of France's darkest days: three by Jean Bruller, the satirical artist who won fame during the war under the pseudonym of Vercors, whose "Silence of the Sea" became a best-seller in this country, and whose press, *Les Editions de Minuit*, was one of the engines of the French Resistance; and three, plus a postscript, by Elsa Triolet, wife of Louis Aragon (poet, novelist, Communist stalwart), who was active with her husband in the work of France's patriotic underground. All six stories have been written with more than literary purposefulness.

Those by Vercors are the work of an author who knows how to channel and control expertly the emotions which animate his fiction. They are also the work of one whose realistic technique is at the service of a vision which discovers large and moral meanings in particular instances. Two of these tales are tragedies of disillusionment; the histories of men who lived to witness what they had believed, with every fibre of their being, could not ever possibly be. The third records the destruction of a soul, the annihilation of a man's "humanity," by way of Buchenwald and Hochswörth.

Best of the trio is the story of

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Thomas Muritz of Pressburg, whose fraction of French blood was his dearest possession, who loved France all his life long, adored her history, believed in her glory, trusted her character as some men trust God, became a Frenchman in all things, and lived just long enough to see French gendarmes, acting under orders of Pétain, deliver up their own countrymen to be shot as hostages by Germans. But hardly less effective and affecting is the tragi-comedy of Vendresse, printer and veteran of Verdun, who gave all his faith to his old commander, knowing that the man who had said, "They shall not pass!," could never let France down. Weakest of the three, in my opinion, is the narrative most heavily and deliberately loaded with horror, the one designed to be most powerful. This tells the story of an underground leader whose hideous experiences make him feel he has been degraded beyond the lowest level of his kind.

These Vercors stories are guided missiles, managed with skill, and calculated to explode on contact with minds already emotionally prepared.

Elsa Triolet's patterns are less neat, her effects of a subtler character, her writing more conspicuously stylistic. The stories of Juliette Noël and Louise Delfort, both Resistance workers, draw obviously on the author's own experience; but, oddly enough, she is most successful when dealing with the character of Alexis Slavsky, an egocentric, non-political artist, who bitterly resents the war and all its works as a personal affront, and who survives the occupation in a kind of walking dream.

It should be noted, also, that Elsa Triolet is remarkably successful with another character: the city of Lyon, with its blank-faced houses, its maze of secreted courts, its network of dark *traboules*, its multitudinous letter boxes, and its pulsing hidden life. It is when she writes of Slavsky, of Lyon, and of Louise's Russian background, rather than of the ardors and perils of the Resistance; when she wins our interest by starting, as it were, from scratch, instead of exploiting ground already prepared for her, that I am sure that her literary talent is superior to Vercors's. But it is as yet undisciplined. Her narrative sprawls, and her effects are not only impressionistic, which would be well enough, but even haphazard. Emotional tension sometimes slackens when the cord should be tightest. One might go so far as to say that when "A Fine of 200 Francs" won the Goncourt Prize the award must have been made for promise, or extra-literary reasons, rather than for performance.

Scapegoat Symbol

THE BURNING SPRING. By Fynette Rowe. New York: A. A. Wyn. 1947. 245 pp. $3.

Reviewed by HOLLIS ALPERT

THIS is an uncommonly well-written novel. In it Jud Palmer, an upstate New York farmer, emerges as a man of honesty and patience who would have thrived off the rich land he tended were it not for the evil in the minds of some neighbors of the farming valley. A grandfather of Jud Palmer had been a Mormon, and the word alone was sufficient to evoke visions of carnal sin in people like John Ritt and Mattie Pruner. Jud's sons, Ned and Harl, also partake of the venom that poisons the community, and their adolescent years are made harsh and bitter by the implacable hostility they encounter on every hand.

This would have been an altogether grim book were it not for the way Fynette Rowe has, often enough, of relieving the atmosphere by her sensitive capture of the qualities of hill, lake, and valley in the Finger Lake district used for her setting. These glimpses are sometimes brooding, sometimes enchanting; her people are

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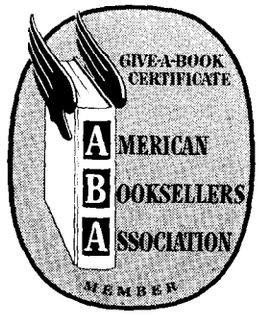

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seen against the luminous backdrop.

Not quite so enchanting are some of the people who enter into the Palmers's lives. There is Sate Ritt, a malicious and sadistic spinister of forty, sister of John Ritt and owning half his farm. She is a midwife of the community and finds herself exalted with the powers over life and death she thus holds. Her brother is weak and futile and manages to focus the cause of his difficulties on Jud Palmer, instigating some of the terrorism designed to chase the Palmers from the valley.

The story takes place approximately thirty years ago, about the time of our entrance into the First World War. Up until that time the catastrophe in Europe did not impinge too startlingly on the minds of the valley inhabitants. But when the war hit home the prejudices were fanned brighter, and Jud found himself persecuted more than ever. He is an unheroic figure, for he bowed before the storm—and while Jud's story has a real poignance about it, there is also a lack of tragic quality which might have been achieved if Jud had acted with more forthrightness. As it is, he stands as a scapegoat symbol, forced to suffer because of the evil attributed to him by those who saw the reflection of their own minds.

But although Jud emerges as the central figure, there are others who are drawn in full and careful detail. The author's view of farm-life is a sharply realistic one, and the pastoral quality of the setting is not used to take the sting from what she sees.

It is all done with such quiet, unassuming skill that a novel of such large literary merit as this one might very well be overlooked in the hullabaloo of comment on current novels written on more immediate and strident themes. Fynette Rowe won an Avery Hopwood award with her first novel, "The Chapin Sisters," and with "The Burning Spring," her second, she shows clear signs of becoming an American writer of rank.

Suppressed chapters from

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As originally written and personally annotated by

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Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MADAM WILL NOT DINE TONIGHT *Hillary Waugh* (Coward-McCann: $2.50)	Well-bred private 'tec finds corpse of missing Westchester siren in woods near home where dinner guests wait—all excellent suspects.	Nice to meet shamus who doesn't over-drink, fracture King's English, or try to make all possible dames. Solution cleverly handled.	Refreshing
T AS IN TRAPPED *Lawrence Treat* (Morrow: $2.50)	Murders of Midwest beauty-with-past and diabolic crime-writer deeply involve industrial designer. Lab.-minded detective helps clear him.	Bunch of high-strung characters; reasonably opaque puzzle; fancy sleuthing by detective and bemused suspect; emotional quotient consistently high.	G as in Good
I FOUND HIM DEAD *Gale Gallagher* (Coward-McCann: $2.50)	Girl "skip-tracer," on Manhattan trail of kidnapped 'teen-ager with *two* frantic mothers, runs dead-heat with cops in double killing.	Female investigator, with police family-tree, quite credible, although methods madden homicide squad. Ending bit trite but previous events satisfactorily thrilling.	Above average
THE BLANK WALL *Elizabeth Sanxay Holding* (Simon & Schuster: $2.50)	Accidental death of Long Island girl's shady swain entangles delightful mother in web of lies and blackmail. Tragic Irishman extricates her.	Unsurpassed character work carries off story which basically is hard to believe. Most of people are so real that they hurt.	Distinguished
DRAW THE CURTAIN CLOSE *Thomas B. Dewey* (Jefferson House: $2.50)	Private op. "Mac" wades through blood to solve mystery of Gutenberg Bible and its million-dollar contents. It happens near Chicago.	Twelve deaths. Five murders, one police-slaying, four fogged by Mac, one by heroine, one suicide. What more could anybody want?	Phew!
THE ANGRY HEART *Leslie Edgley* (Crime Club: $2)	Returned veteran, set to avenge deaths of wife and her brother, fortunately thwarted. Another party obliges. Vet discovers who and why.	Against Calif. art-dealer background author builds unusually effective plot. Characters rather overdrawn, but tale grips, right up to explosive end.	High grade

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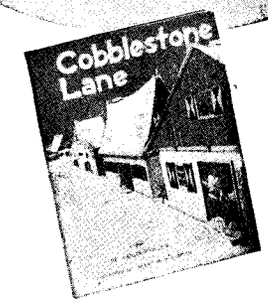

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BELLES-LETTRES

(Continued from page 13)

Because the journal was not generally available, various legends grew up concerning it. One was that it was a complete record of Shelley and Mary's life together. But, "Either by specific daily entry or by summarized entry, approximately 2,119 of Shelley and Mary's 2,903 days are accounted for by the journal." And if the public suspected that any secret, private affairs were concealed therein for it to slobber over, they little knew how cautious a diarist was Mary! But for the real friends of Shelley and Mary, there is a great deal of detail, delightful and moving, even if a good part of the journal is already familiar. The editorial apparatus is excellent. One inestimable service the editor has performed is in his Appendix IV, on Shelley's reading. The books mentioned are arranged both alphabetically and chronologically. Some of the authors Shelley read who are now obscure have been identified. A precise preface explains all the textual points of the journal. In 1944 Mr. Jones appeared as collector and editor of "The Letters of Mary W. Shelley." He has devoted years to work on the Shelleys. At the time of their amazing elopement (and the fact is not realized by most readers) Mary was a girl not yet seventeen. Shelley was then only twenty-two. He was dead at thirty. The eight years between 1814 and 1822 were filled for them both with enough reading, domestic tragedy, and portent for English literature, to have occupied several long lives. What more beguiling episode than, when at last they had been able to get some money to enable them to leave Paris (when on their honeymoon, with Claire) they set out for Charenton in the evening, *carrying* the donkey they had bought "who was weak and unfit for labor." And what more pitiful than Mary's entry of Oct. 2, (1822):

> For eight years I communicated, with unlimited freedom, with one whose genius, far transcending mine, awakened and guided my thoughts. I conversed with him; rectified my errors of judgment; obtained new lights from him; and my mind was satisfied. Now I am alone—oh, how alone.

At the end of that year she wrote the lines which seem to me in every respect worthy of her great immortal lover:

> Thy name is added to the list which makes the earth bold in her age and proud of what has been.

VE RI TAS

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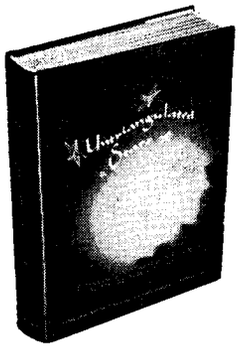

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COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
RAVEL, VALSES NOBLES ET SENTIMENTALES; DAPHNIS AND CHLOE SUITE #1. San Francisco Symphony Orch. Monteux. Victor M 1143 (4) $5 *Comparison:* (Suites #1 & #2) Paris Conservatory Orch. Münch. London Decca EDA 29 (2)	A rewarding comparison. Victor's has best kind of moderate liveness, Decca represents extreme in long-period reverberation, over-all pickup. Difference in tonal range not significant—other diffs. count for more here.	A (A— to A)	The Valses are fascinating previews of the later (no better) "La Valse." Monteux's Daphnis includes rarely heard Interlude for wordless chorus (cf. "Sirènes" from Debussy Nocturnes). Difficult bit of singing, done well & on pitch. Monteux plays faster, more punch, less mood than Münch.
HUMPERDINCK, HANSEL AND GRETEL. Metropolitan Opera Co. Risë Stevens, Nadine Connors *et al.* Columbia M OP 26 (12) 2 vols.	Far and away best opera job so far, if you like close-to pickup for voices. Amazing naturalness and "presence" (accentuation technique); ultra-clear, wide range. Highs seem boosted.	A+	Opera was never so clear, so immediate and real as in these records, first of new series, but this is a gumdroppy work for beginning. Stevens a bosomy Hansel, slightly unbelievable; Connors a good Gretel. English preposterous.
BRITTEN, YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA. Liverpool Philharmonic, Sargent. Columbia M 703 (3) $4.60	Excellent recording, though its "curve" makes it seem tubbier, weaker on highs than domestic Columbias. Fine percussion effects.	A	Originally music for film. Heavy-footed, humorous quick-brown-fox of the instruments; free variations on Purcell theme à la Prokofieff. No dialogue, just music. Good piece.
BEETHOVEN, THEME AND VARIATIONS IN F, op. 34. Leonard Shure, pianist. Vox 602 (2) $2.85	Good piano recording though still bit percussive in loud high notes. Nice liveness, gives spacious feeling.	B to B+	Ingratiating late first period work, time of 2nd symphony (cf. 2nd mvt.). High compliment to Shure: he is self-effacing in favor of Beethoven.

TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT

MY GREATEST fear in the Petrillo ban on recording is a long deadlock. Though Petrillo's methods are not polite, I don't think the argument is all one-sided: thanks to Taft and Hartley, this December, Petrillo will lose both the principle and the financial benefits he won through the royalty on records manufactured. It looks as though the big companies, well overstocked with advance recordings, intend to sit this one out. If so, the big losers are two groups, the consumers and, even more, the small companies, who have little voice, no choice in the matter, and who are desperately unable to wait.

This column, which believes in an American musical democracy where small companies have a fighting chance to live, where the consumer has an equal choice among all companies, urges those concerned to precipitate a settlement now. We consumers like the present set-up. We like the increased availability of all sorts of U. S.-made music that would never appear on a big-company label. We like the specialties, from harpsichord music to Dixie Land, from Janacek to Jesquin. We like American recording methods and we appreciate the pioneer work of small companies in the use of plastic records (now so successfully established), in the organization of subscription series, in the reprinting of historical documentaries. And we decidedly do not like the prospect of all this enterprising local development shutting up. Or fleeing to Europe. (It's no coincidence that at least three small company heads have been recently or are now in Europe on extended business.)

I'm no businessman or lawyer, but I fancy the big companies can find a way to settle again with the musicians and still make a penny, if they have a mind to. So far they have not been noticeably dented by Petrillo's take. For the good of the industry, then, let them settle, and let us all get back to business.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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A NEW "HUGO"

(*Continued from page 10*)

some primordial chaos as light was separated from darkness on the first day, set off and forever subject to the condition of BEING SEEN. . . .

It is this point of view of the intelligence that determines the structure of Valéry's work. It has been said that his "Introduction to the Method of Leonardo da Vinci" is rather an introduction to his own method; for what he did, instead of analyzing the works of Leonardo, was to imagine at length the structure and operation of a mind so complete, so universal, that all the sciences, all the arts, were its tools. Then, he said, if such a figure ever actually existed, it was certainly Leonardo. Likewise, in "La Jeune Parque," whatever may be the difficulties or obscurities of that major poem, whatever its beauties or philosophical import, its subject, as Valéry liked to tease his critics by remarking, was simply the thoughts of a young girl one night. Even in his essays on contemporary affairs, it was the plight of the mind faced with the facts of modern history that interested Valéry. The mind as it works, loves, knows, suffers in man, lives in science, myth, the arts, or becomes Europe, "brain of the earth's body"; consciousness as it ranges from the lower limits of bodily death or sleep through stages of waking and knowing to the extreme limits of judgment; every gesture, every intermediate throe, spark, or step of the mind as it rises from the rich muck of the unconscious to the complex structures of the artistic or mathematical imagination; the human and historical condition of consciousness, the drama of consciousness, that is the subject of all Valéry's work. He called it the Intellectual Comedy.

Valéry's mind was so intense it could not move without saying something; he demands close reading. If you grant him that, his text lights up at once, and you find a style extremely simple and clear. The wonderful resources of rhetoric he manages to draw from such homely clarity make the quality of his style (and make it no doubt impossible to render justly in translation). Yet, Valéry's meaning is never off somewhere in vague spaces of spoofing or speculation, it is in his words. Whatever else he may mean, he always means what he says.

The foregoing article is in the introduction to "Monsieur Teste" by Paul Valéry, to be published by Alfred A. Knopf, November 10.

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the Phoenix Nest

ELEGY FOR A BARTENDER

JOHN, the bartender, died of a heart attack.
He was kind, patient, a good listener.
Death was sudden.
He always seemed so robust.

Joe Pearson, one-time football star,
Journalist, high light on the bench of justice,
Piano player, collector of oriental items,
Self-appointed sampler of strong liquids,
Playing a selection on the juke-box
Delivered the oration:
"Do you hear the music, John?
All your life, you lived for music.
I hope that this can reach you, where you are.
You said goodbye in your own quiet fashion.
They never took your fingerprints, boy,
But you were liberal with a hand-out."

Margie, the faded blonde,
Former school teacher, seven times divorced,
Also had her views regarding John.
"I spoke to Helen, faithless as she was,
John and she were married a long time.
Her nerves are shaken; I pity the poor girl;
John was the only right man in her life;
A most devoted husband."

And the proprietor added:
"Drink up, people. The next round is on me."
The word "bum" is not permitted
In this respectable barroom.
John would feel offended.

MARIO SPERACIO.

* * *

George E. Kellogg, of Box 191, Rapid City, S. D., is kind enough to send me this information:

> In your department of Sept. 27 Mildred E. Haylor of Bartlesville, Okla., inquires of "Snowshoe Al's Bedtime Stories." While I am too young (thirty) to know the originals, I do know the volume she means. The originals ran in the "Line O' Type" column in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* while it was conducted by Richard Henry Little in the 1920's. Snowshoe Al was actually Albert J. Bromley, according to the copyright dated 1926 in my volume. The title page bears the publisher: The Contributors Club, which I would guess was made up of "Line O' Type" members. The volume was printed at the A. D. Winthrop & Co. press. My father was a newspaper columnist before the idea of "cleaning up" led him into the laundry business, and while liberal in most of his views, he insisted on buying the *Chicago Tribune* year after year, but only to read Little's column. He quit buying it when Little died. About the time he introduced me to the bees and flowers, he also introduced me to the "Line O' Type or Two." I have always felt that the enthusiasm he felt for R. H. L., as he signed his column, was well merited. During the 1920's the contributors seemed almost to be neighbors, knowing about each other, their families, foibles, and fancies. Somehow, it seems too bad that those times have disappeared so completely. Although the humor in the "Bedtime Stories" may lean towards slapstick, I am as enthusiastic as Miss (?) Haylor is and would like to see others that could appreciate their simplicity.

* * *

CONDENSED INDEX OF INSEX

All bugs
Have mugs
Like thugs!

At every chance
Ants
Get in pants!

Moths
Love cloths!

Lice
Aren't nice!

Termites
Work nights!

Fleas?
Jeez!

Comejens
Have no fren's!

Never tease
Bees!

I can't abide a
Spida!

Why is a gnat
Spelled like gthat?

Always mistreat a
Mosqueata
And always bang a
Changa!

Each grasshopper
Bantam or whopper
By rubbing wings
Sings!

The Management
would have fits
If you took nits
Into the Ritz!

C. R. HARTZELL.

* * *

Thoughts by the Way: Davis Edwards has written an article reprinted from *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, and sends it to me from the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. It is called "The Real Source of Vachel Lindsay's Poetic Technique," and concerns the influence on Lindsay of the lecture-readings of S. H. Clark of the University of Chicago. Vachel, asked if they had been a source of his poetic technique, would answer, "Yes, that's where I got it." The whole brochure is a distinct addition to our knowledge of the work of probably the most originally American poet we have had in this century. As artist, Vachel's work frequently left much to be desired, but for originality of genius, and spiritual power, he was unique. None approaching him in those respects has come after. . . . In the department of Literature and Art in the Catholic Weekly *America*, edited by John La Farge, S.J., the Rev. D. A. Bischoff, S.J., has done a service to American poetry in printing three Gerard Manley Hopkins "discoveries." While gathering material in London for the complete account of Father Hopkins's Jesuit years, Father Bischoff uncovered some 20,000 unpublished words of Hopkins's journal. The poems are a translation of the Latin Hymn "Iesu, Dulcis Memoria," and the translation of two odes of Horace. In each case the Latin text is given in a parallel column. This issue of *America* is of Sept. 6, 1947, and in October a series of articles by Father Bischoff appeared relating to Hopkins. The address of *America* is 70 East 45th Street, New York 17. . . . Shortly after the publication of his latest book of verse, "Pencil in the Air," Samuel Hoffenstein died. His "Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing" will long be remembered for the richly witty presentation of an attitude of complete pessimism. But Hoffenstein was not merely a light versifier or a comic poet, he could write most movingly and with large apprehension. He was expert in versification, and had a roving, restless mind, and a faith deeper than shallow cynicism. . . . There are a few writers of intellectual integrity working in Hollywood, and Hoffenstein was of that small number.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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(Continued on page 50)

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(Continued from page 49)

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 711

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Lying hid; latent.	196 57 74 1 23 51 100 115 88 33 93
B. Leather overalls worn by cowboys as protection against thorns (Mex. Sp.).	180 4 127 49 171 119 101 151 92 90
C. The use of words in a sense opposite to their proper meaning.	70 2 3 185 85 78 21 194 110 174 54
D. Lake in Adirondacks, Hamilton County, N. Y. and river of the same name.	69 98 116 38 25 10 103 184
E. English actor, father of English pantomime (1692-1761).	76 129 67 163
F. Uncompromising; irreconcilable.	121 192 30 97 114 182 156 40 8 159 175 140
G. Goddess of peace and fertility; "Terra Mater" of Tacitus (Teut. Myth.).	108 75 160 94 9 20 80
H. Dirty; slimy; slovenly.	59 45 152 132 104 22
I. A Carthaginian goddess, tutelary of the city, worshiped in Rome as "Dea (or Virgo) Caelestis."	162 191 99 107 128 56
J. Elaborate embroidery, esp. of gold (Hist.).	79 125 82 24 53 145 161
K. Dressed stone with a sharp-pointed hammer.	13 66 166 176 17 188
L. Neat and compact or well-ordered.	36 84 118 126
M. Small food fish of excellent quality (S. Africa).	141 37 96 47 72 63 19 130 34

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
N. Forced out; expelled.	29 186 136 61 68 109 153
O. Irish woman poet whose "Psyche" (1805) attracted the attention of Moore and Keats (1772-1810).	31 142 154 15 138
P. Wearing a wheel-shaped collar (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries).	178 105 43 147 155 193
Q. A grass cultivated for its seed by agricultural ants of Texas (2 wds.).	52 122 134 113 164 102 81
R. Russian officer and statesman (siege of Leningrad, W.W. II).	158 95 195 112 41 149 44 146 60 137
S. Negative statement of what is to be understood affirmatively, or vice versa (Rhet.).	5 91 32 131 55 89 150 81 7 46
T. Yellowish.	73 83 42 187 144 172 12 18 64
U. Current Irish woman writer of poems, children's books, plays for Dublin Abbey Theatre.	28 58 173 14 189
V. Convex; arched; vaulted.	157 143 167 124 148 35 135
W. Author of "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" (1901).	139 27 183 6
X. Barters; gives in exchange (Colloq.).	197 77 48 177 106
Y. Constrained; executed with vigor.	169 165 123 181 39 16 62 26
Z. Russian violinist and composer (1827-91).	168 133 111 117 50 86 71
Z'. English cathedral town; also N. H. town of famous prep. school.	11 170 179 190 120 65

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

						1 A	2 C		3 C	4 B	5 S		6 W	7 S	8 F	9 G	10 D
11 Z'	12 T	13 K	14 U	15 O		16 Y	17 K	18 T	19 M	20 G	21 C	22 H		23 A	24 J	25 D	
	26 Y	27 W	28 U	29 N	30 F	31 O	32 S	33 A	34 M	35 V		36 L	37 M	38 D	39 Y	40 F	
41 R	42 T		43 P	44 R	45 H	46 S	47 M		48 X	49 B	50 Z	51 A	52 Q	53 J	54 C		
55 S	56 I	57 A		58 U	59 H	60 R	61 N	62 Y	63 M	64 T	65 Z'	66 K	67 E		68 N	69 D	
70 C	71 Z	72 M	73 T	74 A	75 G	76 E		77 X	78 C	79 J	80 G	81 Q		82 J	83 T	84 L	
85 C	86 Z	87 S	88 A		89 S	90 B		91 S	92 B	93 A		94 G	95 R		96 M	97 F	
98 D	99 I	100 A	101 B	102 Q	103 D		104 H	105 P	106 X	107 I	108 G	109 N	110 C	111 Z		112 R	
113 Q		114 F	115 A	116 D	117 Z	118 L	119 B	120 Z'		121 F	122 Q	123 Y	124 V	125 J	126 L	127 B	
128 I	129 E	130 M	131 S		132 H	133 Z	134 Q		135 V	136 N	137 R	138 O	139 W	140 F		141 M	
142 O	143 V	144 T	145 J	146 R	147 P		148 V	149 R	150 S		151 B	152 H	153 N	154 O	155 P	156 F	
	157 V	158 R	159 F	160 G	161 J	162 I	163 E	164 Q	165 Y	166 K		167 V	168 Z		169 Y	170 Z'	
171 B	172 T	173 U	174 C	175 F	176 K		177 X	178 P	179 Z'	180 B	181 Y	182 F	183 W	184 D	185 C	186 N	
187 T	188 K		189 U	190 Z'	191 I	192 F	193 P	194 C	195 R	196 A	197 X						

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 13 of this issue.

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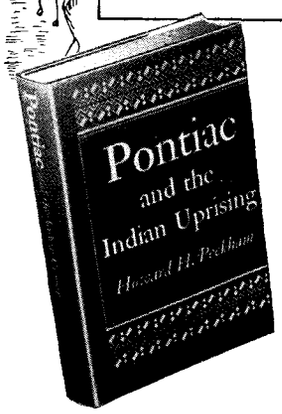

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